

THE AMERICAN

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# Cinematographer

★ THE MOTION PICTURE CAMERA MAGAZINE ★



August,  
1941



# Superior

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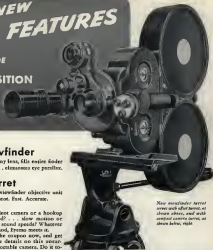
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# AMERICAN CINEMATOGRAPHER

THE MOTION PICTURE CAMERA MAGAZINE

VOL. 22

AUGUST, 1941

NO. 8

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### The Front Cover

This month's cover shows Charles Lang, A.S.C., (right, adjusting lamp) making a low-angle dolly-shot of Gene Tierney for Walter Wagner's "Darktown." Note use of umbrellas to shade camera, and effect of "bounced" lamp on players—especially in case of Negro at right, who is partly in Lang's beam, and man at left, who is not. Still by Ed Hendemon.



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For production sketch made of a scene of *Millie*, production "Theater Land." Note how language and light are specified

## Let's Design Pictures For The Camera

By GORDON WILES

WE hear a great deal nowadays about "designing" productions. It has become quite a fad among our art-directors to take their screen-credit with the phrase "Production Designed by Joe Deake," instead of the old familiar "Art Director, Joe Deake." But—always with the exception of William Cameron Menzies and one or two other equally outstanding members of the craft—we no longer have real "production design" on the screen.

As a matter of cold fact, we are really getting less real "art direction" than we did a few years ago, for as a glance at the credits of almost any current production will show, what we used to lump together as art direction has now been divided into two specialized departments—set design and set dressing. And inevitably, with two specialists working this way, there's often an urge for each to try to outshine the other, with the result that, as Director René Clair pointed out in a recent article in *THE AMERICAN CINEMATOGRAPHER*, "each are over-dressed; they contain so much 'realistic' detail that the audience's attention is distracted from the story-action."

The trouble is that since sound came in most of us—not only art-directors, but directors, producers and writers alike—have forgotten the camera. Oh yes, we've realized it had to be there to record the action that accompanied our dialog, but we've forgotten the camera's ability to tell stories which, when silent films were at their peak, had made the motion picture a distinct form of art. It wasn't painting; it was distinctly different from the theatre; but it told stories in a way that had gained it world-wide recognition as a new and distinctive art.

Sound came, and gave this new art-form the ability to speak. And straightaway we became so engrossed with appealing to the audience's ears that we forgot their eyes, and the fact that at least 85% of man's strongest impressions of anything come visually rather than aurally. Furthermore, we were hypnotized by a new race of magicians—the sound engineers. They knew all about sound (so they and their). We didn't. They told us we couldn't do this, that we must do that; that we would have to do things this way—for the microphone—rather than that

way—for the camera—and we did. While we've lately come to realize that the sound-men are just human beings like the rest of us, and can get acceptable recordings even under conditions they originally shrank were impossible, a vast deal of damage has been done, for most of us have lost sight of the tricks of visual story-telling which, coupled with an imaginative use of sound, could give our pictures ten times the "punch" most of them now have.

So today the majority of our art-directors have become more truly architects than designers of pictures. Our writers have become more interested in *dialog* than in *visual effort*. Our directors have become more concerned with the reading of lines and basic action than with visual story-telling.

But there is one man in the troupe who still is, and always has been more concerned with the visual and its dramatic value than with anything else. He is the cinematographer or director of photography. For fourteen years he has been in there fighting for all he was worth to preserve the vital visual side of our medium. Speaking both as a director and as an art-director, I think it's time he got some help from the rest of us! I'm by no means unselfish in this. I know that by taking full advantage of the cinematographer's understanding of visual drama, any director or art-director in the industry could make his own contribution to a production more telling, and gain credit for being associated with the making of a better picture than would otherwise be possible.

What is the best way to take advantage of this? I feel it is by developing a system of three-cornered pre-production planning, in which the director, the art-director and the cinematographer would work together on a script, translating it from written words to visual pictures.

As an example, suppose we have a script, fourteen pages of which are laid in a dining-room. How do we go about bringing that to the screen today?

The art-director gets the script and sees the notation that such-and-such scenes take place in this dining-room. He checks up a bit as to the social and economic standing of the character in whose home that dining-room is supposed to be, and decides, let's say, that it should be a Georgian drawing-room. So he makes a rough sketch of a Georgian dining-room and submits it to the director, with a more or less rough floor-plan. The director sees that this contemplated set won't interfere particularly with his planned action, and OK's the sketch.

Then our art-director proceeds to build a beautifully realistic Georgian dining-room. The set-dresser inspects the set, sees it is of Georgian period, and pro-

Production still of the same scene as filmed. Note how clearly Director Welles and cinematographer Allen followed their pre-production plan for the scene.

needs to dress it with furniture and props of the correct Georgian design.

Finally the set is completed and the picture is probably well into production. And the cinematographer at last comes into that set. He comes on cold. Nine times out of ten, he's never seen it before—and the tenth time he has had opportunity for only a glance the night before so he makes a quick survey to tell his gaffer how he wants the set rigged for the next day's shooting.

But when he finally comes on that set, the director of photography knows one thing. He has, as we've said, some 14 pages of script to film on that set. But he doesn't deal primarily in written or spoken words. To him, those 14 pages of script mean from 38 to 60 or more camera-sets. Or, to put it more accurately, between 39 and 60 compositions—compositions which must be artistically good and dramatically telling. Maybe more, if the camera is to dolly or ride a boom.

Now I flatter myself that as an artist I know a little something about composition. But I know very positively I could not well into any set or room "cold" and create 60 compositions at the snap of a finger. Certainly not 60 which were both artistically sound and dramatically forceful.

And while our directors of photography are faced with that sort of problem daily, I don't think they're very much more successful at it. Heaven knows, they're greater artists than most of us give them credit for being, and trained from long years of experience to create compositions almost instinctively. But I'm sure that most of them will candidly admit that in such a situation they'd emerge with perhaps a dozen or so really good compositions, and the rest mediocre or worse.

On the other hand, suppose the director of photography had had the opportunity to work on the final stages of that script's pre-production preparations with the director, the art-director and the writers. Between them they could work out a visual breakdown-script for every bit of action occurring in that set. They could sketch things out, phrasing each cut, movement and camera-angle for composition and dramatic value before an inch of film was shot. They could walk on the completed set, not faced with a problem of snatching compositions out of thin air and planning dramatically graphic action on the spot at the moment, but with a complete visual script ready-prepared beforehand, with each cut and set-up carefully sketched out—and the set and its dressing planned for it.

This sort of arrangement will have many immediate advantages. In the first place, as might be expected, the cinematographer will have an accurate plan of his compositions on every phase



of the action—a plan in the preparation of which he participated personally. Of course he will to some extent vary his actual shot from the pre-planned sketch as minor changes in casting, costuming, and so on make slight changes in camera-treatment necessary. But he'll have something tangible to work from—a carefully thought-out basis for good, graphic compositions, rather than having to scratch things out of thin air at the last minute.

The director and cutter will find the flow of action on the screen smoother and more natural. In all probability this type of planning will do much to minimize or eliminate the need for "protective shots," for the advance study and collaboration that goes into making such a sketched-out plan will inevitably give a good indication of what angles will be needed in the final cut, and what work. This should save a great deal of valuable time on the set; in some cases, it can supply set-construction, eliminating persons needed for "production" angles, and naturally saving on set-cost.

In any event, both director and cinematographer will be able to do their work quicker and better because of the time they've spent planning out each detail beforehand.

And—perhaps the greatest advantage of all—the results on the screen will be more visually compelling. Each cut, angle and set-up will have been carefully planned beforehand to put the maximum of visual dramatic value on the screen. In some instances, this technique may well lead to misleading dialog; but in any event the picture will have more "punch" because the visual impact of each scene is a thing

of careful planning rather than luck.

It may be objected that a system like this represents an ideal, which can't be obtained under actual production conditions. Those who raise this criticism are simply overlooking the fact that in isolated instances it has been done and is being done. William Cameron Menzies about invariably works this way; I am sure he is doing so on his current film, "King's Row"—and that Director Sam Wood and Director of Photography James Wong Howe, A.S.C., are turning out a more forceful picture because of it. Some few others have to varying extents used and benefited from this system. I have employed it myself on a number of productions, both as director and as art-director.

As a matter of fact, the most discussed picture of the year—Orson Welles' "Citizen Kane"—must necessarily have made use either of this system or of something very closely like it. Whether you like the picture or not, you cannot deny that from start to finish there was a sincere—and in the most part, successful—effort made to coordinate the visual presentation with the dramatic. And everyone in the industry has commented on the fact that "Citizen Kane's" young producer-director, Orson Welles, embarked on this production with no previous motion picture training and proceeded to do things with camera and microphone which the rest of us, whether or not we may have inwardly regarded them as technically possible, had certainly failed to do.

To my mind—and with no intention of detracting from Welles' admittedly great ability—the greatest factor in his film's

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Butler Ralph Owen operating the lighting switchboard.

## A Versatile New Lighting-Control Switchboard

By HAROLD NYE and MICKEY MORAN

Technical Dept., Warner Bros. Studio

**F**ASTER films have resulted in a considerable decrease in the amount of light used in motion picture photography and smaller lighting units are becoming more and more popular. Spots and floods as small as 100 Watts have become standard equipment.

In the past, when using the larger units for foreground lighting, it was customary to balance the lighting by choosing lamps of the proper types and moving them in and out and adding diffusion until the proper intensities were arrived at.

The introduction of smaller and more efficient types of lighting units has made the use of precise dimmers an essential method for balancing light intensities. Much time is saved in making the set-ups and the light-values can be changed any time during the action as the actors move about, or when dolling from a long-shot to a close-up.

Some cinematographers have peacefully eliminated diffusion on foreground lamps, resorting to it only when the lamps have to be dimmed so much that the color becomes too red. This results in considerable saving in diffusion media.

At first a few single plate-dimmers were used to control the more important lamps. When the lamp was too small for the dimmer to take down, additional lamps off the set were plugged in, to "ballast" or load the dimmer down. This consumed time and tied up equipment.

Demands for more and more dimmers on every set, and increasingly complicated dimmer-controlled lighting set-ups soon made it apparent that the old, make-shift methods must go. To meet modern conditions, a new and more versatile unit must be designed. The problem was crystallized when Bert Glennon, A.S.C., was assigned to direct the photography of "They Died With Their Boots On." After studying the script

Glennon realized that dimmers would have to be used extensively in almost every interior scene in this picture, for the majority of the men would be in the unreflective dark-blue U. S. Army uniforms of the Civil War and post Civil War period, while the women would be in lighter colorings, demanding constant adjustment of lighting intensities as the characters moved around the sets.

Handling this problem with conventional dimmer equipment would be extremely difficult and time-consuming. Therefore, Glennon urged I. M. "Slim" Corbin, Chief Electrical Engineer of the Warner Bros. Studio, to develop a more flexible unit which would meet these problems. Corbin accordingly assigned the writers and Ralph Owen, who was to serve as Glennon's gaffer on the picture, to design and construct a portable lighting-control unit which would meet all these requirements, and save as much time on the set as possible.

The result was the lighting console shown in the illustrations. It is a compact, flexible unit and when in use is set close to the camera where the operator has a good view of the action and can also watch the director of photography.

Each of the eight control-circuits is numbered and when a lamp is plugged in, the operator brings a big bearing corresponding number on the lamp. When the gaffer or the cinematographer asks for a certain lamp to be brought up or taken down, there is no confusion on the part of the operator as to which control shall be manipulated.

The unit shown has four 650-Watt dimmers and four 2500-Watt dimmers and auxiliary equipment. The four dimmers on top of the unit are 650-Watt Ward Leonard type S.R.D. dimmers having 52 contacts. Indicators are attached to the handles of these plates so that the operator always knows what point the dimmer is setting on. Ballast lamps may be connected across any or all of these dimmers simply by throwing switches on the panel. These switches also light red pilot-lights on the panel so that the operator is always warned that he has the ballast across the dimmer. When loaded with a 250-Watt ballast, these dimmers will draw a 100-Watt lamp down to where it will not photograph.

The ballast lights (four 250-Watt on the 650-Watt dimmers and four 500-Watt on the 2500-Watt dimmers) are mounted in a well-ventilated, light-tight compartment inside the console.

While 22 steps on a dimmer are not enough to give flickerless dimming, any or all of these can be mastered through control No. 3 which has 110 steps. Mastering the small units through one of the larger ones has proved to be a very handy feature. The intensity of various lamps of the "Baby Janer" type can be regulated separately and thrown on the master after which all of these lights can be taken up or down together without disturbing the balance.

The control-panel for each of these dimmers consists of a circuit switch with a green pilot-light, a ballast switch with a red pilot-light, a fuse, and a transfer switch that is used to connect the circuit to the "hot" bus or through the master dimmer. Whenever one of the small dimmers is fed through the

(Continued on Page 394)



**P**ICTORIAL, as well as dramatic, coordination between background action and foreground action is a seldom-discussed phase of picture-making—one of those "elementary" details we too generally take for granted. Yet it is of highly practical importance to both cinematographer and director, for it can make or mar a scene, both photographically and dramatically. And while it pertains to both directions and cinematography, neither can afford to discuss the matter as wholly a part of the other's responsibilities. Thorough-going and plain-spoken cooperation is needed. The director can deal with the strictly dramatic effects of what happens in the background, but he cannot always evaluate it in terms of its effects on photographic composition. Similarly, the cinematographer can deal with it as a phase of composition, but he cannot always consider it solely from this viewpoint alone. For the completely coherent result both are seeking, the two should work as closely together in caring for the detail as they naturally do in dealing with the broader aspects of their work.

It might easily be expected that pictorially intrusive background action might be more of a perplexing problem in the so-called larger scenes, in which sizeable crowds and mobs of people take part. Actually, I think the reverse is true. In making mob scenes and the like, everyone—the director and his staff, the cinematographer and his staff—are thoroughly conscious of the background and its action. They all watch closely to see to it that no small, unexpected movement (or lack of it) in the background affects the perfection of the scene as a whole.

But in smaller scenes—those employing only a few extra players in the background—most of us are likely to be a bit off guard, concentrating more on the direction, action and lighting of the principals in the foreground. Thus is where some of the most disturbing background errors creep in.

Perhaps the commonest fault of this nature is calling for action in the background, and not specifying what kind of action is needed to coordinate pictorially with your foreground action. Action of the wrong type or tempo can direct audience attention from any but the fastest-moving foreground action with amazing persistence.

For example, in one recent picture the leading man is shown singing a song in the music-department of a big store. Naturally, showing this in a two-shot angle, there should be some action in the background to produce a natural effect. But in this particular case, the dominant background action, repeated in several cuts, included a girl shopper descending a flight of stairs in the background. Every time that girl walked down those stairs the audience's eye was forcibly jerked from the singer to this dramatically unimportant extra!

What happened was that those con-

Director Bush (left) (right) and photographer of *Shadows* Milton Kraus, A.S.C., also used a camera for "This Woman Is Mine"



## Action In The Background!

By FRANK LLOYD

An talk to Wm. S. B. A.S.C.

erned in making the scene either forgot or overlooked the fact that the singer, even though nearer the camera and in better focus, was necessarily practically motionless, and so a visually passive element, while the sharply contrasting diagonal movement of the girl in the background was, compositionally speaking, a much more dominant element of the composition. In addition, this particular movement, beginning at the upper left-hand corner of the frame, was also more forceful compositionally, from its mere positioning. The same girl, quietly examining merchandise on an equally distant counter, or slowly moving about the store, would have been fully as natural for background purposes—and not visually intrusive.

In the same way, suppose we have a scene laid in a de luxe cafe. In reality, in such a cafe at a busy hour the waiters are likely to be rushing very briskly back and forth with their trays. But on the screen, if we had those waiters

moving at anything like the pace they would use in the real cafe, their swift movement would almost certainly "break" the scene from our principals seated at a table in the foreground! To be cinematically effective, the action of waiters and "extras" must always be made to underplay reality in order to convey an impression of reality.

Incidentally, a smart cafe is a fine place for a director or cinematographer to learn about grasping. Go into any first-class cafe—especially during a moderately slack hour—and notice how skillfully the *Maitre d'Hotel* has scattered the patrons about the room. If he knows his business, there will be no grasping of guests in one place, with an ocean of empty tables elsewhere! Instead, he will use to it that there is a table or so in use in almost every part of the room, so that the incoming customer gets an impression of a well-patronized eating-place, even though com-

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# CANADA'S WAR MOVIES

By CHARLES W. HERBERT, A.S.C.

WITH so many foreign fields closed to American newsreels and shorts producers by the war, good news comes from good neighbors across our northern border line. Understanding the needs of American producers, the National Film Board of Canada has opened the way for closer cooperation to the end that this summer will see the greatest production activity of shorts to date in Canada. Already scheduled and in part production are a dozen reels of various sections of the Dominion. Fox Movietone News plans a "Magic Carpet" of Eastern Canada, a *Sportsworld* of Eastern Canada and a *War Effort* reel. Pathé plans a "Sportscope," Paramount a *War Documentary* reel, Fitzpatrick a *Technical* reel on Ontario and another on Quebec. Columbia has released a travelogue on Quebec. The March of Time will do their second "Canada at War" feature and Universal will release a "Going Places" reel on Victoria, B. C. and produce a reel of Quebec and another in the Canadian Rockies. In addition Universal will break into the color field with some Canadian-made material.

Barton Holman is now including a sweep across Canada in his motion picture lecture series for next winter.

All of this current activity has in cleanness with the United War Effort Plan, of Canada to not only acquaint the Empire with what Canada is doing for its part, but also to make a large lad for the American Tourist Trade.

For the first time American producers are being offered by Canada a full measure of cooperation and facilities so essential for the production of newsreels, travelogues, sports and documentary films.

Special invitations and inducements have also gone out to still-picture photographers and amateur movie makers in the United States. This manifold plan has been conceived and is being carried with the tireless efforts and skill of John Grierson, recently appointed Film Commissioner for the Dominion.

The National Film Board established in the Spring of 1939 thus embarked on

a career of urgently needed activity.

Grierson is a native of Scotland, has for many years been one of the foremost exponents of the documentary film and was previously the head of the film unit of the Empire Marketing Board and film-production chief for the General Post Office of Great Britain, with offices in London. He has travelled extensively in Europe and the United States and has a direct understanding of International film needs, methods and markets.

It is not a new thing for a Government to make motion pictures. There's hardly a country that has not seriously engaged in motion picture production through special film departments or along with local commercial producers. Various departments of the United States Government have produced and stored up a vast library of films. While most of these films have been circulated here and there and many are good, they were woefully lacking in two vital essentials for complete evaluation of the vast field of use that has stood of any newly-launched film. Like a ship they might sail on and on to the far corners of the world if they have the needed propelling force and guidance.

To attain the full scope of distribution a film must necessarily come up to the standard of technical perfection established by major producers. And it must be definitely entertaining.

It is these two qualities that have been lacking in most Government-conceived and produced films.

Too often, experts in their own field of endeavor—agriculture, trade, industry, education, etc.—have planned and produced films with little knowledge of motion picture technical or entertainment requirements. Their finished product has pleased themselves, their associates and followers, but has usually failed to attain theatre circulation or any extensive distribution where the public can see their work.

There is of course the exception of films produced by totalitarian Governments who demand that their films be consistently screened in the theatres in lands where their word is law.

The United States Film Service, under able direction of Pare Lorentz, with Floyd Crosby, A.S.C., cooperating on the camera, brought forth Government-pro-

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Scene assignments from Canada's War Film. Top picture at top, troops leaving for overseas duty, about a Canadian soldier, fourth, soldiers in a training camp, fifth, look for British troops, looking through a periscope. Courtesy National Film Board, Ottawa

Finishing an underwater scene. The camera is in the low tank attached to the barge, while assistant being prepared to enter scene at left, "Tarsan" (Tarsan) ready at right to dive into the scene.

**F**ILMING the underwater scenes for MIGHTY's latest "Tarsan" picture provided, both technically and in other ways, one of the most unusual backstages I have ever made. To begin with, Wakulla Springs, a secluded spot about 35 miles from Tallahassee, Florida, was chosen as the location—and it provided backstaging delight! We lived in a beautiful resort-hotel, a very short stone's throw from the springs; going to work in the morning was a matter of pepping and off away from a well-laden breakfast-table and walking perhaps a hundred yards to the shore. But once we reached that point, no matter which way we turned the camera above-water, it would be filming something that looked more like Tarsan's African jungle home than Africa itself! And a few feet below the water's surface we found what I am sure must be the world's finest "stage" for underwater movie-making.

Wakulla Springs is really more like a lake or river than the conventional concept of a spring; it is more than 186 feet deep at its deepest point, and it flows about 225,000 gallons per hour of the clearest water I've ever seen. With a white sand bottom beneath, an almost tropical sun above, and this crystal-clear water between, it is the ideal place for underwater photography.

We did our camerawork from a specially-built underwater camera-bell attached to a barge. Quite properly, they called the device "the hole in the water." It consisted of a round metal drum, weighted at the bottom with concrete. Steps led down to the floor of the photographing chamber, and the cameras looked out on the underwater scene through a 6-inch optical glass port-hole large enough to permit lens and finder a clear field of view but not, unfortunately, wide enough to permit much panning. There was room in the camera-chamber for about three people and the camera; but this made it rather crowded, so during most of the actual shooting Director Richard Thorpe and I usually stayed above, leaving Operative Cinematographer A. L. Lane and Assistant Camera-man Harold Baldwin more elbow-room.

Since as the depth increases, the photographic light naturally falls off, and with it the distance to which the lens can penetrate the water, the camera tube was designed to keep the lens about 8 feet below the surface. For the same

reason we made most of our scenes shooting shoreward, to get the most pleasing background.

A very important item in handling underwater camerawork is to be sure that no strong outside light hits the inside surface of the camera port-hole to cause reflections. To make sure of this we covered the top of the tube with black cloth, and also fitted the tube with a wooden top and a sliding hatch.

Another very important matter is maintaining the proper temperature inside the bell. If the air inside grows too hot, the glass, cooled as it is by the cold spring-water outside, will steam up exactly as the windshield of a closed car does on a wintry day. We corrected this problem by placing electric fans inside the bell, powered by storage batteries, to circulate the air, while several hundred pounds of ice kept the inside temperature down to a point reasonably close to that of the water outside.

Not so many years ago, in making the early talkies, we used to lock the

Operative Cinematographer up in an almost air-tight soundproof camera-booth where he sweltered during each "take" while the Director of Photography took his ease outside, on a more or less air-conditioned stage. But on our Florida location, the tables were turned. While Director Thorpe and I sweltered under the tropical summer sun on the barge, the operative crew inside the air-conditioned camera-bell did their work in cool comfort!

The basic rules of good photography apply almost equally regardless of whether you are making a scene in the open air or under water. We found that we got the most pleasing results by shooting in a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -crisis front-light. In the same way, we found it necessary to do our underwater work only on clear days, when there was a good sun and plenty of blue sky. In clear water it may be technically quite possible to make an underwater exposure on an overcast day, but the overcast, which diffuses the light

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## Filming Underwater Movies From the 'Hole in the Water'

By LLOYD KNECHTEL, A.S.C.



## Aces of the Camera

### VIII:

## JOSEPH VALENTINE, A.S.C.

By WALTER BLANCHARD

**A**T thirty-eight, Joseph Valentine, A.S.C., is one of the industry's youngest top-flight directors of photography. Yet he can look back upon a career of twenty-three years spent behind the camera—nineteen of them as a full-fledged director of photography!

It began this way. Back in 1915 an ambitious Italian-American youngster, fresh from the photographic classes of a New York high school, decided he was going to make photography, and particularly motion picture photography, his

life work. So over to the old Paragon studio at Fort Lee, New Jersey, he went, cheerfully announcing that he was applying for a job as assistant cameraman. The lucky self-confidence which is still one of Joe's major assets did its work. He got the job—and with it began his climb to the cameraman's heights.

Now that the industry has grown to "big business" stature, and cinematography has become a highly complicated art-science, an assistant with a mere four or five years of studio experience

is considered a pretty raw, inexperienced specimen. But things were different twenty-odd years ago; a clever, ambitious fellow could master all that was known about cinematography in a good deal less than five years.

Joe did. Four years—almost to the day—after he first saw the inside of a studio, he stepped out on another set, this time at the Fox east-coast studio, a full-fledged first cameraman, assigned to direct the photography of his first feature picture! For purposes of record, it was "Hoe Hubbard's Wives," starring Shirley Mason. And it must have been photographically all right, for Joe remained a first cameraman.

But if you think that, having finally "made the grade" and advanced to first cameraman's stature, Joe Valentine found his career stretching smoothly ahead, you're wrong. Take it from Joe! "That," he says, "was where the real sweat and toil and tears and heartbreaks began. And it was where I really began to learn what cinematography really means, too."

"Out of nineteen years as a first cameraman I spent eleven making 'B' productions and fighting the pace of 'typing'."

"Beginning with a woman star—Shirley Mason—and making her pictures for several years, I suddenly found myself 'typed.' They'd say, 'Oh, Joe Valentine—I know him; he's all right photographing women, but he's lost on exteriors.' So I made myself learn how to do top-quality work on exteriors. I did 'westerns' I did 'quicksie' action pictures; I did travelogs; I traveled half-way round the world to shoot atmospheric shots and, later, process backgrounds."

"And I did it too well. They'd say, 'Oh, Joe Valentine—I know him, he's great on exteriors, but he can't photograph people!' So I had it all to do over again—convincing the executives who determine what a cinematographer can and can't do that I was just as good at making glamour-dreams of women as I was at pictorializing scenery."

"Frankly, I don't set any rhyme or reason for 'typing' cinematographers. If a man is a good cinematographer, he should be able to photograph anything—and do it equally well. We admit that if a man can do exteriors, and falls down on interiors, he isn't a complete master of his work. In the same way, if a man is an interior glamour-specialist, and can't handle exteriors, I feel he can't be called a real cinematographer."

"But as a matter of fact, I don't think there are many men among today's directors of photography who can't handle everything that comes along. Maybe they don't get a chance to show their versatility, but there's no need of typing them. If you come down to cases, I could mention quite a few of the men who right now are regarded as the best wood in glamorous feminine stars—who served their photographic apprenticeship shooting westerns and comedies. And there are just as many men who are

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# A.S.C. on Parade

Apologies to Powell Marley, A.S.C., for the incorrect credits printed at the head of last month's review of "Moon Over Miami." Seems our printer dropped a line of type at the wrong moment, and when he put it together again he thought Ted Tetzlaff, A.S.C., instead of Poe, had directed the photography of the 1936 Fox Technicolor epic. We're sorry all around. And thanks to Dan Fagan, A.S.C., for bearing it to our attention!

Actor-talk out Universal way are getting Stanley Cortes, A.S.C., as the back of his latest invention. His gadget consists of an adjustable stand-lamp carrying a small colored globe. He places it just out of camera-range to indicate where the player is supposed to look in his offstage glances. By using lights of different colors, several such objects can be indicated, and players cited accordingly.

Bob Fittack, A.S.C., on one of Hal Roach's new streamlined short-length features.

Soon after any A.S.C. Board Meeting—Past-Pres. John Arnold and current Pres. Fred Jackman comparing notes about Johnny's ritz-y new Packard Clipper and Fred's ritz-y Buick. Looks as though Jackman's got the edge, though—he and Mrs. Jackman have soaked away for a restoring vacation in Oregon, while MGM's booming production schedule keeps John tied to his Culver City desk—and his Packard's mileage low!

Ben Reynolds, A.S.C., strolling across the Universal lot, reminiscing about experiences in Death Valley photographing Erich von Stroheim's 1924 thriller, "Greed," recently rerun at the Academy's showing of famous films. And they do say Ben's 1934 camerawork still compares favorably with who's current now!

Clyde De Vinna, A.S.C., and his troupe on MGM's "Texans" set all sporting colts in color.

"Little Ritz" Tanaka, A.S.C., says he got a vacation between shooting Columbia's Fred Astaire picture, "You'll Never Get Rich," and starting his next opus, the latest "Love Wolf" whodunit. Seems he snuck off one morning and caught the early show of Ernie Haller's "Marguerite."

Max Fabian, A.S.C., at the MGM commissary's Cuccia Table taking a swift ribbing when Ed Wagner, A.S.C., and Lester White, A.S.C., discover a

Filipino bun-boy who has a brother-in-law named Fabiano.

Bill Steiner, A.S.C., a long way from his usual haunts in New York, Technicoloring a FitzPatrick travel-ogue in Glacier Park.

George Merhan, A.S.C., currently busy lensing "Royal Mounted Patrol" for Columbia, as such a fond for preserving the illusion of reality in pictures he won't even tell his wife what is or isn't a process-shot!

Charles Lang, A.S.C., after locationing all over New Mexico, Arizona, California, and points adjacent locationing for Wagner's "Bandow," sporting a vivid tan.

Charles Rosher, A.S.C., can sleep if he wants on Sundays—for directing the photography of "One Foot in Heaven," Warner's flummoxing of a middle-western clergymen's life, he's in church six days a week!

Tony Gaskin, A.S.C., and the Minox spirit coming out of Blanche Howe's "Ching Foo" restaurant, appropriately "The Man Who Came To Dinner"—but better-tempered, so we'd say, than the title character in his current film of that name.

John Boyd, A.S.C., in Buenos Aires organizing Latin-American newsreel coverage for Paramount News.

With we had the same sort of lack with weather that Ray Perrett, A.S.C., enjoys. That wild breeze can travel half-way around the world for a single scene, he upis fanned for photographic washes—and have the sun pop out the second he gets art up, vanishing again as soon as his scene's in the box.

Seen at the Paramount commissary's caviar table—Victor Milner, A.S.C., and John Russell, A.S.C., discussing something-or-other that isn't to serious, judged by their intent expressions.

Harry Hollenberner, A.S.C., teamed with Ray Benashua, A.S.C., Technicolor's smiling maestro, laughing at Victor Moore's comedy while lensing "Louisiana Purchase." On the same set, Harry Perry, A.S.C., a visitor with a deep tan proved up along with a lot of Technicolor scenes down in the Bahamas. And Al Gibbs, A.S.C., gets a bit of the California variety taking out a Technicolor 2nd unit for the same picture.

## Freund, Greene, Poll Toppers

Karl Freund, A.S.C., and W. Howard "Babe" Greene, A.S.C., led the field in the results of the Hollywood Reporter's Critics' Preview Poll for June, garnering top honors for their joint achievement Technicoloring MGM's "Blonnie in The Dusk." Second place went to another Technicolor job, "Moon Over Miami," photographed by Powell Marley, A.S.C., Leon Shamroy, A.S.C., and Allen M. Duvy, A.S.C., while a third Technicolor production figured in a three-way tie for third place, "Shepherd of the Hills," Technicolor by Charles B. Lang, Jr., A.S.C., and W. Howard Greene, A.S.C., "Out of the Fog," photographed by James Wang Howe, A.S.C., and "Man Hunt," photographed by Arthur Miller, A.S.C., were the three films involved in the third-place photo-finish.

Don't mention dub—especially his one—to Vernon Walker, A.S.C., for a while. Seems BKO's trick-dept. head-man had a 304-rounder booked the other day—and it got away!

Memo: ask Jack Greenhalgh, A.S.C., if that new destroyer just launched in Brazil and christened "Greenhalgh" is named for one of his relatives.

Mark Stengler, A.S.C., busy at Monogram filming "Let's Go Collegiate."

Russell Metty, A.S.C., lensing "Week-end for Three" at RKO, while Robert DelGrosso, A.S.C., offshoots "The Unexpected Guest."

You should have seen the expression on the face of Karl Struss, A.S.C., the other day as Susan Hayward walked past in the commissary—and after all the pictures you did with Mae West, too, Karl!

Jerry Ash, A.S.C., is reported much better after his recent very serious siege of bronchial pneumonia, but some fifty pounds lighter.

Russell Harlan, A.S.C., when he finished his most recent "Hoping Casanova" Bill Boyd starrer for Harry Sherman, celebrated something of an anniversary. Seems it was the 41st of the series he'd lensed—all with the same star and producer. He's creeping up on the all-time record set by Dan Clark, A.S.C., who did 55 in a row with Tom Mix.

Alvin Wyckoff, A.S.C., and Charles Schenbaum, A.S.C., discussing earlier days and personae when they were silent-filming together at the old Lucky Studio with Cecil De Mille, Walter Reid, and others.

# THROUGH the EDITOR'S FINDER

A FEW nights ago we attended the preview of a very important major-studio feature. It was photographed by one of the foremost directors of photography in the industry—an Academy Award winner who for many years has invariably placed high on every list of the industry's "ten best" cinematographers.

The next night, at the preview of another of the same studio's films, we saw an inconsequential short-subject photographed by the same man.

It made us think.

Here was one of the industry's greatest camera-artists—a man who is usually entrusted with the responsibility of bringing to the screen feature pictures representing from \$5,000,000 to \$10,000,000 of his employer's money, to say nothing of the far greater value of the screen appearance of the stars who can be made or broken by his camera-treatment. And because he happened to be on the payroll and without a feature assignment for a few days, he was put at a routine little two-reel short that any cinematographer in the industry could have handled equally well.

From where we sat, it just doesn't add up. No studio would put a Raoul Walsh, a Henry Koster, a Sam Wood or Rouben Mamoulian to directing a short just because he happened to be under contract and between pictures. "It wouldn't be economy," the executives would tell you. "Not even the best of those top-headshot directors could bring enough to a short to offset the big price his salary would take out of the short's slim budget; the short doesn't offer him the opportunity, and besides, after his career in directing so many 'A' features, his heart just isn't in it. Without intending to, he'd 'walk through' the assignment. Far better put a less provincial man on his way up, or an older man on the way down to either of whom the management would mean opportunity rather than drudgery. For a fraction of the salary, they'd do a vastly better job."

Every word of that holds good for your top-flight director of photography, too. His salary may not be so big, but even so, it will take more out of the short's budget than he can possibly be worth in the production. And with his eyes for so many years focused on top-flight "A" features and Academy Awards, his assignment to the short will seem a demotion to unexciting drudgery. A younger man, on his way up, or perhaps one of the relatively few older men who for one reason or another, though capable, have been finding job scars, will do better work on that short, and at less cost. To them, it represents opportunity!

The directors of photography in almost every studio in the industry realize this. Scarcely a week passes but in some studio you'll encounter an "A-picture"

cinematographer who'll tell you how he begged his employer not to assign him to make short, or "B" feature, or testing job for another man's production, even if it meant going off salary while some less fortunate member of the profession made the picture.

The directors of photography in one studio—MGM—are right now trying to do something constructive about this problem. They are in the middle of discussions with the studio executives, asking that the men customarily assigned to "A-picture" tasks be relieved of the routine between-picture jobs of filming shorts, tests, backgrounds, and program pictures. They are willing, even, to agree to go voluntarily off salary during those periods, while the less fortunate members of the craft have a chance at both the work, the salaries, and the opportunities to win themselves better berths in the industry.

This is a move that should be supported—and initiated—by cinematographers throughout the industry, for it is a worthwhile step forward for the entire profession. It is only accidental that it would give the "A-picture" men the between-pictures rest and relaxation they so sorely need to enable them to carry on under the great nervous loads they carry. It is incidental that it would do this at a financial sacrifice to those men, or at a saving to the producers.

But it is of the greatest importance that it would give much-needed employment and opportunity to two—perhaps three—groups of men who need both.

It would lend a helping hand to those older men who have grown old behind the industry's cameras. They may not be the first-rank artist-technicians they were a few years back, when they were making the industry's greatest films, and making history with them, but they can still do well enough on shorts, tests, backgrounds, and even program pictures. They deserve that chance.

Every studio in the industry carries on the payroll as stock or bit players from a half-dozen to a score of the actors and directors whose work and names helped build the industry, but who now need, not a pension, but a chance to work honestly to earn a modest existence. There are cinematographers, too, who have done just as much for the industry—and who today need the industry's help, not as charity, but as a chance to do such work as they can to provide honestly and modestly for themselves and their families now that their great days are through.

It would lend a hand to another deserving group—the younger men who, while perhaps directors of photography on "B-picture" features and shorts, have yet to have the chance to prove themselves on major-studio production.

It might in time even be developed into a plan, too, which could give some

of the young men of the industry—today's ripe-for-promotion apprentice cameramen—a chance to try their wings without entailing either the risk for the studio or the crushing responsibility for the man, of starting immediately on a major feature assignment.

From every aspect— isn't it worth a good try-out throughout the industry?

TWENTY-FIVE years ago, in New York City, a handful of earnest men got together, spurred by the idea that there ought to be some sort of organizational meeting-place in which all those interested in the technical phases of the cinema, and its allied crafts could work together toward the stabilization and solution of the many and varied problems of motion picture engineering.

Today the organization they founded, the Society of Motion Picture Engineers, celebrates its silver anniversary. The Society these men founded in July, 1916, is today one of the oldest and most respected in the industry. In those twenty-five years, the SMP.E has grown into a world-wide organization including in its membership some thirteen hundred of the world's greatest experts in cinematography, film-processing, sound-recording, photochemistry, illuminating, electrical and acoustic engineering, optics, equipment-design, projection, and all the innumerable other technical and scientific crafts allied to motion pictures. It has developed and standardised standards and operating standards so universally accepted that 35mm, 16mm, or 8mm films made in any part of the world may be run on equipment made or used in any other corner of the globe. It has in varying measure been responsible for the varying technical advances in every phase of motion pictures. It has—almost alone among film groups—been strictly to its appointed line of engineering, never deviating to pay tribute to passing fads or petty politics. It has been, and is, one of the really great constructive forces of the industry.

Therefore as the SMP.E. celebrates its twenty-fifth birthday, the A.R.C. and THE AMERICAN CINEMATOGRAHER join whole-heartedly in congratulations and good wishes to the Society and its President, Emory Hare, A.R.C.

A few months ago one of our reviews sharply criticized the poor quality of a great seen in preview. Recently we saw another of the same studio's films previewed, and noticed a remarkable improvement in print-quality. We don't claim credit for this improvement. But it's the sort of thing we're aiming at whenever we write critically of anything. We may speak freely and unforgottenly, but always, we hope, constructively and for the industry's benefit.

# PHOTOGRAPHY OF THE MONTH

## HERE COMES MR. JORDAN

Columbia Production.

Director of Photography: Joseph Walker, A.S.C.

"Here Comes Mr. Jordan" (originally and more appropriately "Heaven Can Wait") is one of the finest jobs of photography Director of Photography Joseph Walker, A.S.C., has turned out in some time. Played throughout for comedy, it doesn't offer the obvious opportunities for spectacularly dramatic camerawork and lighting that some of Walker's other, more heavily dramatic productions have, but he makes it distinguished visually by giving it sensitively-kept "mood" photography where the ordinary impulse would be to shoot it in a fairly high-keyed comedy mood and let things go at that. The picture is definitely the better for Walker's cameratreatment.

Even though it is one of the better, and more successful comedies of the season, there is ample variation in dramatic mood and tempo to give Walker's lighting considerable play. And we've seldom seen photography that followed the mood of the action more sympathetically. A particularly good example of this—and one which can be recommended to students of camera-technique—is the sequence leading up to the second murder of the stockbroker whose body Robert Montgomery temporarily occupies. Up to this point, the treatment has been fairly high-keyed; but as the sequence progresses, the visual key is subtly lowered, with increasingly somber shadow-effects taking place in the compositions, until—by strictly visual means—the audience is mentally prepared for the murder which follows.

The special-effects work of the production—which, being uncredited, may be presumed to be Walker's achievement—is outstanding. Both technically and pictorially the scenes in the celestial way-station where "Mr. Jordan" waits (with a transparent plane!) to pick up the passengers he is to ferry to Heaven, are outstanding. The concept is one which could all too easily be thrown out of key by inept camerawork; but Walker's realization brings it to the screen deftly, with the precisely right visual pace of controlled reality, unobtrusively and shyly inconspicuous better.

His execution of the various appearances and disappearances of Montgomery, as the disembodied spiritlighter, and his scenes, "Mr. Jordan" and "Messenger 7018" furnish another technical highlight of the film. One could wish, however, that there might perhaps have been a few more of those, and that also in at least some of the scenes in which these characters were shown and established as being invisible and invisible to the other players, they could have been shown as more convincingly double-exposed ghosts. Similarly, see

wonders if it would not have been more dramatically revealing if Montgomery, as he takes over temporarily the bodies of the deceased broker and spiritlighter, could not have been helped in his characterizations by changes in makeup which would make things more believable to the audience.

Another serious flaw in the picture is the fact that one whole sequence—that is the broker's office—a set employed in another very recent Columbia release is employed, scarcely without change. It seems ludicrous to see Montgomery, in the broker's body, using an office which belonged to Jessel, first in "Blue Kary All The Answers." One almost expects Tene, or at least Jess Bennett, to walk in and order the interloper out!

A highly enthusiastic word must be said about the laboratory work on "Here Comes Mr. Jordan." In the past, we've seen some very indifferent prints from this studio—and said so. But it is a pleasure to report that when the preview print of "Here Comes Mr. Jordan" was made, Laboratory Supervisor George Seld and his staff were very much on their toes, and turned out a print which is not only the best Columbia print we've seen in many a year, but one which would be a credit to any laboratory. We hope they'll keep up the good work.

## MY LIFE WITH CAROLINE

RKO-Radio Production.

Director of Photography: Victor Milner, A.S.C.

Special Effects by: Vernon L. Walker, A.S.C.

This is another example of Milner in his best mood—the deft, crisp polished comedy of the Lubich-esque school at which he so gracefully excels. And it is one of Milner's best photographic achievements in every way. His sparkling high-key photography does much to set and maintain the frothy atmosphere of the picture.

A particularly noteworthy achievement is what Milner's camera does to the star, Ronald Colman. Ever since "A Tale of Two Cities" we have seen Colman growing progressively older and wearier on the screen. And inevitably the general audience-reaction has been "what a delightful player he was!" much less than the present-tense mention his performances have really deserved. But in "My Life With Caroline" Milner's cameratreatment of Colman gives the public back the Ronald Colman of a dozen years ago. Seldom has the value of understanding camerawork to a star been more emphatically emphasized.

Vernon Walker's special-effects work is excellent, as usual. There is quite a variety of it in the production, too. Most outstanding, perhaps, is the yachting sequence, which includes some real-

ly noteworthy process-background work in which foreground and background are uncommonly well coordinated.

On the other side of the ledger must be mentioned the settings designed by Nicholas Benneff. Viewed as examples of historic architecture they might, perhaps, be considered worthy of mild praise. But as settings for a motion picture they are atrocious. Instead of providing an atmospherically fitting background to the action, these sets—with perhaps the single exception of the "Van Valley" set used briefly in the opening and closing sequences—continually fight with story, timing and action for the center of the stage.

It is a liberal fact that in several of the most dramatically important sequences of the picture the exaggerated correctness of the sets actually conceals the players from the audience. Perhaps the worst offender in this respect is the set adopted to represent the entry-way and main staircase of Colman's luxurious Florida home. This bizarre creation centers around a lavish staircase which would be questionable as a background even for a Busby Berkeley musical extravaganza number—a fearful and wonderful creation of moderate chroma, hectic and—no help at all—far. And yet quite a bit of important action takes place on and near this stairway.

Inevitably, in much of this action the audience's eye has literally to fight to get past that over-aggressive setting to the people acting on it. Sometimes it's a losing battle. In one important scene in the latter part of the film, when Anna Lee, after starting out to leave with another man, returns home and hurries up the stair, this important action is shown in a long-shot—and Benneff's incredible creation literally hides the fact that anyone is moving up the stair until a line of dialog from another player—"There she goes now"—tells you what you are supposed to be seeing. If this is a sample of Benneff's best work, we fall to see what could convert him to an estate a producer-director as Lewis Miskelov, says, perhaps, his congenitally Misconic name. At any rate, for his next production Miskelov would be well-advised to satisfy himself with a simple art director rather than a "production designer" of this type. He'd get better sets—backgrounds which would give his direction and the talents of his cast a better chance.

## SERGEANT YORK

Jose L. Lasky Production: Warner Bros. Release.

Director of Photography: Sol Polite, A.S.C.

Battle Sequences: Arthur Edeson, A.S.C. "Sergeant York" is in every sense of the word, a great picture—perhaps the most impressive of the season. Pro-

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## Filming A Battle — — in Miniature

By TED VOIGTLANDER

**A** VISIT from my cousin, a corporal in the United States Marine Corps, inspired me to produce a short movie using a military theme. After completing the title epic, which we titled "Rearranging," a thought occurred to me that a preface to the story depicting battle scenes might set the stage for the show. The Fourth of July being only three days away would make explosives easy to acquire. I couldn't visualize blowing Calver City up but might confuse the action to a small area such as my back yard. Thus my first miniature attempt was born.

The areas of action was set up on a table three feet by four feet in dimensions. The scene was to be a miniature "Flamewar," giving one a panoramic view of a battle-scarred area, shell-spattered trees, bomb craters, with rolling tanks and field artillery being brought into action. Enemy fighter planes were to be dived into the scene, one crashing, catching fire and blowing up, a bombardment of a hundred "shells" raining the picture to a close. With this plan in mind I set to work.

First of all I sketched the scene out on paper. The prime requisite of the panorama was the perspective to be obtained—the foreground to focus down to small-scale background objects. This was to give the illusion of depth. It is what an artist would call "forced perspective."

With sketches completed I started building. Fifteen shovels-full of adobe soil were leveled out on the table. Adobe soil, after being dampened, can be molded easily into any topographic scheme. With the topography completed,

the next problem was the adorning the set with trees. I used dried tips from our newly-trimmed hedge. These were short of adhering leaves and branches to give the effect of bleakness. Only small, broken projecting branch-stubs were left. Large tips were put in the foreground, smaller tips placed in back of these, and the smallest ones placed in the rear. One-and-one-half-inch strips of wire grating were woven in and out of the scene to make a barbed-wire entanglement. Sky-blue paper was placed in the rear to give me a sky. As the picture was to be done in 16mm. Kodachrome I had to watch my color-values. Toy war tanks purchased at a dime-store were attached to brown threads strung across the field to the opposite end. Beak model airplanes that a friend of mine built as a hobby were attached to blue-colored threads and were to be worked from above the set, swinging them across the field of action.

Setting up my Model E Eastman four feet center away from the table, I set the angle to shoot slightly down on the field, catching one half set and one half sky in the picture. Parallax problems entered here, but with my present camera I could only approximate the compensation and played the slider slightly upwards at a forty-five degree angle. I decided to shoot at three times normal camera speed (48 frames per second) which would give me the effect of near normal size when projected.

With the scene set for the battle I called for help. In less than ten minutes I had four interested helpers on the scene. One was detailed to draw the

tanks across the field, one to swing the airplanes through the picture, and two to light focus.

The bushes (great firecrackers) were placed under the soil in each plot we wanted to blow up. The first sunlight gave me an f/8 reading for normal camera speed. I had to compensate for a speed of three times normal, thereby opening my stop to f/4.5. With the camera tied down (camera was never moved once we started) I gave the sign for the start. All action was stopped at the end of each explosion. Then another fuse was lighted and action started again. When the airplane crashed into the scene, we stopped action, covered the plane with gaspewter and inflammable cleaning-solvent, put a "fuse" underneath the plane, and touched a match to it. I started the camera going the instant the plane ignited. On the screen this gave us an unbelievable effect of an actual air crash.

We followed this with a bombardment of "lady-finger" firecrackers, setting off two strings which had previously been burned underneath the soil of the battlefield. This closed the picture with a tremendous "barrage." All told, we exposed 100 feet of Kodachrome film.

After viewing this little effort on the screen, I thought that the addition of sound-effects might make it quite an interesting little show. So I called on the assistance of my friend Matt Klimick, who possesses a dual-turntable recording system. We knew that absolute synchronization wasn't possible with the equipment we had, but we tried it, any-





Above, frame enlargements of successive phases of one of the miniature airplane crashes in *Yankee Doodle*. Here, showing fire and explosion. On opposite page, two shellbursts from the "bombscraper."

way. The results have been pretty good—and the sound adds about 300 per cent to the effectiveness of the picture. In addition, improvising battle sound-effects and recording them was fun, though strenuous.

The first step was to provide a definite marked starting-point on the film. With black drafting-ink I "blacked out" a whole frame on the white leader-strip, leaving in white letters the word **START**. Between this starting-frame and the start of the picture, allow enough footage so both projector and sound-turntable can come up to speed before the actual beginning of the picture and recording; this of course will vary according to the equipment used. In my own case it was 23 frames.

The foundation of our sound-effect record was a general mellow of battle-

noise in the background. This we got from an old radio sound-effects record Matt had; believe it or not, it wasn't anything like a real battle—it was a recording of city traffic, hackety walk-out auto-horns or street-car bells. It served our purpose perfectly. We kept this background-noise going all through the picture.

For heavy shell-bursts, we tossed a big rubber ball on the table behind the mike, trying to synchronize reasonably well with the pictured explosions of our freerunner "shells," and keeping an uneven beat rather than a regular bump-bump-bump. For closer shell-bursts we would slam a book closed,

or sometimes drop a book behind the mike.

Machine-gun fire was simulated by dragging a pencil across a washboard. The airplane noises were made by vibrating a vase between my fingers, moving nearer to or farther from the mike according as we wanted the plane approaching or receding. For the plane-crash, we slammed a book, and at the same time added a special sound-effect made by dropping a sack with about 200 pennies (from a penny bank) in it on the floor. When the sack broke and the pennies scattered the mike picked up an excellent crash-tum. The sound of the fire was made by crinkling a sheet of ordinary cellophane wrapping-tissue.

It is very important to establish a  
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## Ray Fosholdt Built A Movie-Maker's "Dream Home"

By WILLIAM STULL, A.S.C.

EVERY movie-maker cherishes at least a mental picture of the "dream home" he hopes some day to build—one which will be not only a dwelling-place, but a home studio in which he can make, edit, and screen his pictures under ideal conditions. Most of us have to be content merely to dream of this ideal movie-making home—and talk endlessly about it to any chattering friends who will listen. But Ray and LaNelle Fosholdt of Long Beach, California, don't have to dream about their "dream home." They live in it. What's more, it was in the strictest sense built around their movie-making hobby!

"And we mean that literally," they'll tell you. "We had had our full share of living in apartments and rented houses, with the projector and screen relegated to storage-space in closets, and using a bathroom or an improvised garage-darkroom for Ray's cinefilm processing and still work. So when the family bank-account finally told us we could at last build a home of our own, we agreed that it would center about our movie-making, just as most of the rest of our daily life does.

"We began by drawing up plans for

what we considered an ideal, permanent projection-room. Then we planned a darkroom laboratory for Ray's home processing. After that, we just let the rest of the house grow up naturally around these two essential features."

If you should call on the Fosholdts, you will notice, as you wait for an answer to your ring at the doorbell, an airy, modern, moderately-apointed living-room just beside the front entrance. And thereby you can tell how you mix with this charming family. If they entertain you in this parlor, you can be pretty sure you rate as "company." But if they think you past the living-room's entrance, and take you upstairs to the projection-room, you really "rate" as a Fosholdt friend! Characteristically, they do more living and entertaining in that projection-room than in any other part of the house.

And no wonder, for this projection-room is a friendly place, where one can relax and enjoy conversation or films without formality. A big overstuffed divan and plenty of well-upholstered chairs provide seating of the sort that tempts the visitor to overstay. A magazine-stand filled with well-thumbed copies

of THE AMERICAN CINEMATOGRAFHER and other movie-making periodicals is conveniently at hand by Ray's favorite chair. Along one wall a framed row of Ray's "Petty girls" furnishes a decorative note, while on the other is a frequently-changed series of candid shots of the Long Beach Camera Club and its members in action.

At the far end of the room, neatly framed by drapes, is hung a four-foot headed screen. Behind the divan are two inconspicuous ports through which a pair of projectors throw their beams to the screen.

Theatre-wise, the projectors themselves are housed in a neat little projection-booth, projecting through glassed ports so that victoriously no one escapes into the projection-room to mar the presentation of a film. Fosholdt himself works in a room, so the majority of his projection set-up is his Victor 16mm. projector, while a Bell & Howell 16mm. projector is on hand for showing any narrow-gauge pictures that come his way. Sometimes, as on a recent visit of this writer's to the Fosholdt home-theatre, President Mildred Caldwell of the Long Beach Club adds her own Pliofilm 8 to the projection line-up, and multi-reel films can be given continuous projection as smoothly as in any professional theatre, changing over from one projector to the next without any perceptible break on the screen.

Sound—from discs—is an integral part of the Fosholdt showings. A disc recorder and playback turntable is placed on the projector-shelf between the two projectors, and this, with an earlier turntable installation, connected through the same amplifier permits continuous two-



terrible "sounding." In addition, the attachment to recorder and projector of Synchron-sound synchronizing units makes it possible for Fosholt to record and play synchronized musical scores, narratives, and even lip-synchronized "talkie" sound films.

Unlike most home-projection installations, this sound set-up is no afterthought. There is no disorderly tangle of wiring running along the floor to convey the sound from projection-booth to the speakers "down front." Conducts built within the walls take care of this; all that is necessary is to plug the desired amplifier, etc., into the circuit.

As a matter of fact, Fosholt has somewhat expanded his sound installation since the projection-room was built. His original layout called for a built-in speaker, which can be seen in our photograph masquerading as a light-fixture directly above the screen is the projection-room's ceiling. This fixture began its career as an overhead lighting-fixture in a friend's yacht. But Fosholt obtained it, removed the glass and substituted suitable acoustically porous fabric, and used it to conceal a built-in speaker.

Lately, as the quality of recorded sound has improved, Fosholt has used this original speaker as the high-frequency reproducer of his modernized installation, adding the auxiliary speaker seen standing on the floor beside the screen to handle the low-frequency components. The result is sound-quality very rarely surpassed by the best of professional installations, and far superior to the average home sound outfit.

Naturally rewinds, editing and splicing equipment are nominally stored in the projection-booth. But just as naturally, when a really important editing job is in hand Fosholt moves out to the

above, left, Ray Fosholt handles film from developing stage to drying rack. Right, Ray and Lillian Fosholt and Mrs. Caldwell are two who are seated during, for a little synchronized talkie. Below, Mrs. Caldwell and Ray Fosholt make camera and light at Lillian Fosholt. On opposite page are two views of the projection-room and projection booth from speaker in ceiling above screen.



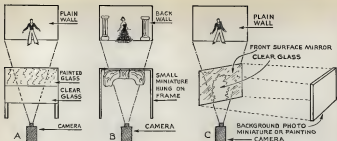
rooter and more comfortable surroundings of the projection-room where he and his wife, usually accompanied by Club-President Caldwell, who is all but a member of this movie-making family, can work—and argue—in greater comfort.

Shelves and drawers inside the projection-booth simplify the problems of storing a movie-maker's innumerable films and accessories. A long shelf directly above the projectors, for example, provides a neatly-indexed place for Ray's films, each 400-foot reel and can slide into its own compartment, with the title of the film lettered beneath. Drawers beneath the projector-shelf provide storage-room for the odds and

ends of 100-foot rolls which Ray, like any other movie-maker, accumulates, and conveniently placed shelves afford room for his auxiliary turntable, records, and similar accessories.

Down on the ground floor of the home, just a few steps from the kitchen, is found the other essential part of this movie-maker's home—the darkroom where Ray Fosholt does the first home processing of films, reversal film this writer has ever seen. Like any well-designed laboratory, it is really two rooms. As you go in, you find yourself in the light end of the lab—a combined chemical mixing-room and a place for such operations as re-shooting and

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## Camera Tricks That Build "Production Value"

By MACK STENGLER, A.S.C.

EVERY director of photography gets plenty of letters from those, and some cinephiles asking, in substance, "How can I, with my home-made camera, get such-and-such an effect I saw in your last picture?" When these questions are about such things as focusing, lighting, composition, diffusion, and so on, we're glad to come through with the answer; most of us use cameras or optics ourselves, and are glad to pass along anything that can honestly be applied to the betterment of substandard filming.

But every now and then these letters ask us about effects that can't very well be obtained with substandard equipment. Usually they're effects that have been secured by either optical printing or the projected-background process. And both of these are for all practical purposes out of reach for the average amateur. True, you can build an optical printer for 16mm or 8mm use—but building it is a real job of precision craftsmanship if you want a printer that will do the things you desire and be accurate enough so it won't give you a trick away. In the same way, you can make back-projection shots with substandard cameras; but doing it on anything much bigger than title backgrounds calls for interlocked synchronous electric-motor drives for camera and projector—plus a lot more projector il-

lumination than is found in most substandard projectors today.

There are, however, some camera-tricks which can be adapted to 16mm. and 8mm. use, which will help add "production value" to your amateur films and maybe eliminate some of your sub-building troubles. I won't trouble you by saying they're simple. They aren't. They call for real precision in camera-operation, and some construction that isn't exactly easy. But the point is—they can be done with some of the better 16mm. and 8mm. equipment now available, if you're willing to work patiently and painstakingly. They are processes which have been more or less extensively used in 35mm. professional work in the past, but which have to a great extent been crowded out by the newer and kinder methods of optical printing and back-projection.

Let's have it understood from the start that they all require a camera which can let you focus the full-frame image on a ground-glass focusing screen. The 16mm. Cine-Special is ideal for it; the various magazine 16mm. and 8mm. cameras, with the ground-glass focusing attachments with which they can be fitted, can also be used, as can, I believe, the Filmo target 8 with its full-frame focusing arrangement. It is just possible, too, that some other cameras, not fitted with ground-glass

through-the-lens focusing, but with really accurate flinders which, by means of a focusing alignment gauge, can be swung into the exact position occupied by the lens in flinding, might be usable, too. That's just a possibility; I wouldn't guarantee it.

The first and probably the oldest and most familiar of these tricks is the "glass shot." In it, a good-sized pane of glass is placed in front of the lens. On it is painted whatever you may want to add to your scene—say a setting in an interior shot, or a background of sky, clouds, mountains, city skyline, or the like, in an exterior. The actual scene and live action are filmed through unparted scene on the glass.

The important point is that—the glass painting must be matched, looking through the lens, to whatever actual set or scene is to be photographed, so that the two blend smoothly into one. And of course the live action of the scene must be so directed that it keeps strictly within the bounds of the unparted part of the glass. Otherwise, as your actor stepped "out of bounds" and crossed the matte-painting line, part of him would suddenly—and for no apparent reason on the screen—vanish.

Another really important thing is that camera and matte-painting shouldn't be moved between the time the painting is made and the time the shot is photographed. If either moves even the smallest fraction of an inch, they're not likely to match up properly when the scene is made. Back in the old days when we used this process in the studio, it was a common sight to see a tripod carefully anchored in the stage floor by tie-down chains, etc., in its proper position behind a glass, with signs all around saying "Do Not Touch!" When the camera was placed on the tripod, it would be perfectly aligned for the shot.

While these glass shots are generally

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**B**EING an actor in professional movies can be a big asset to anyone whose hobby is amateur still or movie camerawork. Day in and day out you're working with the world's top masters of the camera—men to whom all the little tricks of composition, lighting, filtering and so on have become second nature. If you keep your eyes open, you'll learn more things of real, practical value from the things a studio cinematographer does instinctively than you can from any formal instruction.

Take my own case, for example. My hobby is making stills and 16mm movies—portraits, pictorial landscapes, romanticized vacation-film and an occasional little back-yard scenario picture. In my daily work at the studio I'm teamed up with director of photography Harry Wild, A.S.C. Harry is one of the younger generation of cinematographers, but he's a real veteran of "western" camerawork. Right now, we're doing our eleventh picture together, and before that he photographed all the "westerns" George O'Brien (himself a former amateur cameraman) made for RKO. Harry has spent a lot of time teaching me how to make better pictures—and watching him work, I've learned many little tricks that are so instinctive to him he never realizes how clever and helpful they are.

For example, all of us know that one of the best ways to make an effective composition in an exterior shot is to shoot it through a natural "frame" of trees, bushes. But—as most of us have also learned when making vacation stills and movies—nature doesn't always cooperate. All too often we'll find a perfectly swell shot, but no sign of a tree or shrubbery to complete the foreground composition.

That happens even often when a professional troupe gets out on location. But with a resourceful professional like Harry at the camera, it doesn't matter much whether or not nature cooperates. If the "frame" isn't there naturally—he makes one! He always carries with him three or four tree-bushes of different sizes and shapes, and when he spots a composition that needs a framing branch at top or side, he simply snips one of his branches to a wooden stand and puts it where he wants it!

This same idea can be used just as well for amateur movies or stills. Your branch doesn't have to be particularly big, either. A simple, wooden stand will hold it well enough, or you can use a clamp on top of your old, second-string tripod. In a pinch, even friend wife can hold it in place long enough to let you get your shot.

Another trick I've learned is using graduated filters. You can get them in several varieties—shading from clear at the bottom to a fairly heavy yellow or red at the top, or from yellow to red, and so on. They're great for use when you have people in the shot, and want to filter your sky without at the same time filtering your foreground and the



## MY CAMERAMAN GAVE ME Professional Tips for Better Movies

By TIM HOLT

people's faces. Place the filter a few inches out from the lens for the best results; and then if you have a still-camera, like my Speed Graphic, or a movie camera like a Cine-Special, you can study the results on the ground-glass until you've adjusted things for just the right effect. With other cameras, if you have a focusing alignment gauge so you can swing the finder into the lens' photographing position, you can often do the same.

And—these filters are reversible, too. If you're an overly "hot" foreground, you can balance it up nicely using a graduate with its darker portion down instead of up. After a few pictures with Harry, seeing how he used graduated filters and watching the effects on the screen, I've come to use them extensively in my own stills and movies.

You can learn many practical tricks about interior lighting, watching a fellow like Harry Wild work. For example, I've found in my own portraits and films, close-ups I can adopt Harry's hair lighting technique effectively. So I generally use a rather strong, 4-foot cross-light for my key light, a reasonably diffused "filler" light on the other side to lighten my shadows, and a rim

back-lighting to outline the shadow-side of the subject. It makes a very effective lighting—pleasantly different from either the usual soft portrait lighting or a full back-lighting—and it's convenient to work with.

Another thing I've learned from watching Harry work in the studio is to set up a good basic lighting to illuminate the room or set, and do most of the work of lighting the people, and leave only two or three floor units to be moved and adjusted as you change set-ups. Harry finds that's the most efficient way to work in the studio, where he often has to shoot 50 or 60 set-ups a day. For my part, I find it saves me time, trouble and lots of mistakes when I'm shooting pictures at home.

Something else I've learned is that so long as there are accurate exposure-meters available, neither professional or amateur can ever know enough to guess at exposure. Harry is good—no mistake about that!—and he can "read" light and exposure by eye with incredible accuracy. But at every change of set-up, in the studio or out on location, I notice that the last minute before

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## Getting Normal Exposures Under Abnormal Conditions

By P. C. SMETHURST

THE grounds on which the system described in last month's article was chiefly attacked when the writer first brought it forward some time ago were that (a) flat scenes were over-exposed on the screen, and that (b) in a very contrasty subject the shadows were much too dark. Both of these criticisms are due to a confusion of exposure and contrast. The professional cinematographer arranges contrast by reflectors, subsidiary shadow-lighting, and special filters, and if unskilled with so obtain the same results they must naturally adopt similar measures.

A flat subject appears light on the screen because the face tones remain the same brightness as when the sun is shining, but the shadows are not so dark. A similar effect is bound to appear when the sky is overcast; the lack of shadows makes the image seem over-light, although a careful examination will show that the lightest tones are still of their correct brightness level. It has often been suggested that this trouble can be cured by underexposure on a flat subject,

but this merely darkens the sky until it looks leaden, and makes the face of any unfortunate person in the camera field look as though it had not been washed for some weeks. Underexposure is never a cure for flat contrast; a special filter often is.

The other complaint—of excessively dark shadows in a contrasty subject—is based on a similar misconception. If the shadows are to show detail (and every film has a limit to the range of tones it will accept) then more exposure must be given, and the face tones will be burnt out at once, but since in films face-tones are more interesting than shadow-detail (unless the latter is shown as a special close-up for a particular purpose) the result is that the shot seems overexposed.

No two films have quite the same contrast, and it is always possible to choose one with an emulsion characteristic that suits one's personal feelings on these points. Whatever the choice, it is one between two evils: a hard film pops up flat scenes, but makes contrasty ones over-dark in the shadows, while a soft

film shows the contrasty scenes well but makes the flat ones seem very dull indeed.

The lack of contrast when using telephoto lenses has usually nothing to do with subject contrast or film contrast, but is due to light scattered all over the image by the long lens barrel. This light may not be very high in intensity, and thus hardly affects the lightest tones of the scene, but the shadows are fogged by the general scattered light all over them, and come out on the screen much lighter than they have any business to do. The only cure for these troubles is a long lens-box coupled with an effective box which cuts out all the light going through the lens which does not actually fall in the area of the camera gate, a deep yellow or red filter to keep atmospheric haze down, and some attention to the shape of the lens barrel in the form of masks. The least trace of shine on the inside of the barrel will cause quite a lot of scattered light and reduce contrast materially.

One of the important things about the intrinsic contrast of a film is that it affects the extent to which errors in exposure are permissible in practice. It is a matter of experience, as well as perfectly good theory, that a contrasty film is more affected by a slight change of exposure than a soft one, so that in practice any film giving a high contrast must be exposed as carefully as possible. The most difficult films of all to expose are color-films, and this is partially due to the fact that they effect color-separation by monochrome image-contrast. The flat-

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16  
MM

## Home Movie Previews

8  
MM

## NANI O HAWAII

(Beautiful Hawaii).

Travel-scene, 750 feet 8mm. Kodachrome; sound-on-disc synchronized. Filmed by Mrs. Mildred A. Caldwell.

Ordinarily, four reels is much too long for a scene or vacation film intended for other than strictly family showings. But Mrs. Caldwell handles this film of a vacation in Hawaii so deftly that use is continuous only of seeing a very fine picture, and quite forgets the passage of time.

Most noteworthy, perhaps, is the way she personifies her film, interspersing the scenic shots not only with local color, but with humorous shots of herself, apparently at work making the picture and burdened down by an incredible load of cameras and accessory equipment. This furnishes a "running gag" that gives an available "lift" to the picture.

Her choice of subject-matter is excellent; she not only shows the conventional sights of a Hawaiian visit—the hula-dancers, coconut palms, Waikiki beach, Diamond Head, and the like—but takes her camera off the beaten path to show parts of the island most outsiders seldom know of, and fewer visit. In addition, she shows fascinating glimpses of the local color—the hardscore life and people of this crossroads of the Pacific.

The technical treatment of the film is another noteworthy feature: the picture is divided into well-marked sequences, each being climaxed with a spectacular tropical sunset scene eddying in a fade-out, and accompanied in the narration by the comment that so ended another day in Hawaii. With her subject-matter organized this way, she can, when necessary, drop out an entire reel or more when this is advisable to suit her film to time requirements, or to eliminate sequences which may be uninteresting to certain audiences—and she can do this without apparently harming the flow of continuity.

Usually, the film is a delight. Mrs. Caldwell has an uncommonly good eye for composition, and given the inherently potential possibilities of Hawaii, she presents scenes after some of which serious personal criticism as would bring spontaneous applause from any untrained audience.

There are very few technical flaws to be found in the film. There are here and there occasional errors in exposure—usually on the high side—but the majority of these appear to have been made under difficult or abnormal conditions and, because of the interest of the subject-matter, they can usually be excused. Her almost total abstinence from panning is highly commendable, as is her use of a tripod wherever possible. The closing sequence, showing the traveller sailing from Honolulu, might possibly be short-

ened a bit so too much rather uninteresting footage is spent in building up to the departure. A few additional scenes showing the departing visitors finally sailing their way off toward the hope that they may be washed ashore, which, according to tradition, is a sign the voyager will return, would also be helpful in this sequence.

The musical accompaniment, largely from recordings of authentic Hawaiian music obtained in the islands, and the narration, here recorded on acetate discs by the filmer and synchronized by the "synchro-sound" method, add a fittingly professional finish to an excellent film.

## MR. HITLER NEVER LOSES

Documentary, 50 feet 8mm. Black-and-white.

Filmed by Joseph F. Hollywood.

This short film is one of the most unusual little subjects we have ever screened. A satirical view of the German invasion of Poland, it is told through a combination of title-technique, "live-action" shots and unusually effective talk-to-pose substance.

Photographs and caricatures of the German Führer are used as double-exposed backgrounds for titles bearing quotations from some of his speeches. These are in the early sequences contrasted with live-action shots of close views of actions which contrast strongly with the dictator's quoted words—"I want peace!" close-up of a helmet being polished—"I want no war!" close-up of a rifle being cleaned—"These Poles exhaust my patience!" close-up of bullets being inserted in a bandolier, etc. There follows a sequence of remarkable miniature-shots suggesting, by means of toyed store tops, mechanized troops on the move, a mass-attack by tanks, with guns springing, and finally an artillery and dive-bomber attack on a city, with houses blown up, the skyline panned by flames, etc., culminating in a montage of increasingly large sections of a military cemetery, crowded maps showing the dismemberment of Poland, etc.

The entire picture—with the miniatures of course the highlight—is uncommonly well-executed. It also shows a grasp of the fundamentals of editing, dramatic rhythm, and tempo that is seldom seen in either amateur or professional films. Mr. Hollywood is to be congratulated on both his originality of concept and treatment, and upon the dramatic skill with which he has filmed his ideas.

## A TALE OF THE NORTH

Surrealism film, 250 feet 8mm. Kodachrome; sound-synchronized musical score.

Filmed by Frank de Virgilio.

This melodrama of Klondike gold-rush days shows the results of a great deal of sincere and painstaking production effort, and a painstaking grasp of dramatic fundamentals and technique. Exposure, composition, camera-manipulation and similar technicalities are uniformly excellent. In addition, "A Tale of the North" is the first amateur film we've seen which attempts to make use in some measure of the much-publicized "pan-focus" technique. Grady Toland, A.S.C., introduced professionally in "Citizen Kane"—that is, making use of the extreme depth of field afforded by short-focus cine-lenses to permit playing action which conventionally would require intercutting of two different close angles in a single long-shot, with one player well-focused in the foreground, and the other equally well-defined in the background. This technique is actually more adaptable in subtended films than in films, due to the greater depth given by the 28mm, 35mm, 45mm, and 75mm lenses available for 8mm. and 16mm. cameras. De Virgilio has made wise use of this, though he has apparently had some slight compositional difficulties due to under-parallel.

The manner in which the film is divided into well-marked sequences by the expedient of panning up past two-tops and fading out, followed by a fade-in and downward pan from other two-tops to begin the next sequence, is commendable. So, too, is his understanding of the importance of keeping the direction of a character's movement in successive scenes continuous across the screen until he has been shown doing something that makes a change of direction logical. His direction and editing of the disarming fight sequence is exceptionally good, especially as regards the way it coordinates with the musical accompaniment.

Some criticisms are possible, however. First, perhaps is the fact that with the exception of the opening, credit, introductory shot and titles, which are excellent double-exposed titles, the subtitles are all rather indifferent examples of typewritten titles, with dark lettering on a light-colored ground. These should by all means be replaced by more professional-looking titles, with white lettering on a dark-colored (say dark green) background. The opening of the film would also be improved by eliminating the short taton-pole montage between the credit-titles and the introductory title; this montage is too similar to the taton-pole shots which soon after open the action.

A few criticisms from the dramatic viewpoint can also be offered. First, it seems a mistake that both hero and villain should wear shirts so closely alike, unless it is intended that this similarity

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# AMONG THE MOVIE CLUBS

## CALLING CLUB SECRETARIES!

This department of THE AMERICAN CINEMATOPHILE is your department. We feel that there is a great deal to be gained all around by making those reports of club activities available to other clubs and to independent cinemaphiles all over the country. To that end, we ask all you club secretaries to consider yourselves special reporters for THE AMERICAN CINEMATOPHILE with the assignment to "cover" the activities and meetings of your club.

The Editor.



### Minneapolis Elects

The Minneapolis Cine Club, in its 34th meeting before the summer vacation interlude, elected a new slate of officers to pilot the Club's activities when they are resumed in September. Chosen to guide the Club during the 1943-1944 season were Ralph Spragman, President; Or. Harvey Nelson, 1st Vice-President; Arthur Anderson, 2nd Vice-President; Stanley Berglund, Secretary; and Henry Lewis, Treasurer. Retiring President Carroll Davidson and Dr. Maurice Lewis were elected to serve two-year terms on the Club's Executive Board. Answering the questions asked in many Clubs—how to provide employment for deserving vice-presidents—the Minneapolis Cine Club handed their new "second officers" a pair of man-sized jobs, assigning one V-P to handle the Club's Fall Show, and the other to run the Spring Show. The meeting was well attended; the Club's membership is rumored to be 76, and more than 65 attended to cast their ballots in the strongly-contested election.

Through the courtesy of Minneapolis' Eastman Kodak Store, the trophies awarded in the Club's annual contest were prominently featured in one of the show's attractive window-displays, as shown in the photo above. The trophy in the center, emblematic of First Prize,



New officers of the Des Moines Rock Island Motion Tri-City Cinema Club. Left to right: Harold Melville, Treasurer; Miss George Reed, Secretary-Treasurer; Ray Schmidt, President; and Dr. Paul A. Wells, Vice-President. Photo by Tom Gilling.

was awarded to Don Billman, Jr.; the one at the left went to Carroll Michener, Second Prize winner; and the one at the right to Third Prize winner Stanley Berglund. This display proved excellent publicity for the Club, bringing a sharp influx of Minneapolis movie-makers interested in joining the Club—and giving a chance at the trophies via next year's contest.

ROME A. BIERETH

### Australians Film Comedy

The Australian Amateur Cine Society, of Sydney, N.S.W., has completed filming of an old-time slapstick comedy, complete with casted pies and bathingsuits. The filming was done on a mat at the Club's May outing at Lane Cove National Park. About 36 members and their friends attended, and 18 or more cine-cameras enthusiastically filmed the 18 or more scenes of the production in both 16mm. and 8mm., using both black-and-white and color film. Frank Brooks served as producer.

The Club's first June meeting featured showing of several versions of this production, including the "official" version filmed by J. A. Sherlock. The Club's later June meeting was held around a program loaned by the Victorian Amateur Film Society of Melbourne.

The Adelaide Film Club reports a novel competition recently held, for films dealing with the Adelaide area. The winner was Mr. L. Andersen, who entered a scenario film in monochrome with a device sequence in color, reported as the first time in the history of the Club that black-and-white and color had been blended successfully.

JAMES A. SHERLOCK,  
Publicity Officer.

### Utah Screens "Nathan Builders"

The June meeting of the Utah Amateur Movie Club, Salt Lake City, was held at the Hotel Newhouse, with Max Al Morton presiding, and about 30 persons present. The program included "Filming in Sequence," by F. K. Pullmer; "I Have a Problem," by Al Mor-

ton, and a screening of the AMERICAN CINEMATOPHILE prize-winning film, "Nathan Builders," by James A. Sherlock of the Australian Amateur Cine Society. The meeting was judged the best-attended and most successful of the year.

JOHN HUEFNER.

### Long Beach Sees "Grizzly Gulch"

The July 2nd meeting of the Long Beach Cinema Club featured an outstanding film, "Within these Hills" with sound by J. Glenn Mitchell of Joplin, Missouri, a picture showing the contents of life led by the people of the Ozarks. Other pictures shown were, "Branch Business" by Lynn Harshberger; "San Pedro" by Ellen Thumell; "Old Autos" by Richard Carlyle and rushes were shown of tests taken for "Let's Eat."

At the July 16th meeting, prize-winning latching beauty parade pictures and the ones awarded were exhibited. Arthur F. Gerns, Editor of Home Movies, gave constructive criticism of the films and told why they were winners. Through the courtesy of William Stoll, A.S.C., Editor of THE AMERICAN CINEMATOPHILE, the Club was shown one of the best amateur-made scenic productions ever screened. The film, "Grizzly Gulch," 1250 feet 16mm. black-and-white, filmed by Carl Fallberg and Lars Calenzia, was an outstanding example of amateur production.

During the annual Hobby Show at the Municipal Auditorium, July 11-14, members exhibited over 45 different pictures with two evenings being all-request nights. Accompanied by sound and narration, the pictures attracted such crowds that the Club was allowed to use the Commodore Hall for the final night and the pictures were screened to an audience of 2000.

RAYMOND FOSSHOLDY, Secretary.

### Tri-City Elects

The Tri-City Cinema Club (Des Moines, Ia., Rock Island and Moline, Ill.) held

(Continued on Page 426)



# HERE'S HOW

## Cine-Meters For Stills

I have a Weston cine-model exposure meter for use with my 16mm. camera. Is it possible to use this meter for calculating exposure on stills? If so, how can I do it?

R. Wiedrich

This can be done quite easily. After setting your film-speed rating in the usual way, set the "camera type" adjustment of the cine meter for a "type B" camera (i.e., one which at the normal



16-frame speed gives an exposure of 1/50th second.) Then, as shown in the illustration, you can utilize the "frames per second" dial according to the following relationships:

Frames Per Second	Still-Camera Shutter Speed
4	1/30
8	1/60
12	1/69
16	1/80
24	1/75
32	1/100
45	1/150
64	1/200
96	1/300

Choose the shutter-speed desired, and set the calculator arrow opposite the corresponding value for frames per second. Then opposite the light-value obtained from the scene you will find the correct f-stop for shooting that picture at the shutter-speed you've chosen.

## Dissolves and Wipes

Are wipes and lap-dissolves used for the same purpose? If they are, under what circumstances is it preferable to use one rather than the other? As a general rule is it better to avoid wipes (see scene directly wiping off another) and use lap-dissolves instead? Under what circumstances are wipes better than lap-dissolves?

S. R. Barlow

Wipes and lap-dissolves are both used as a transition to carry your film from one time, place, action or train of thought to another. The lap-dissolve, however, is by far the smoother of the two, and is generally preferable. The

wipe—that is, the true wipe in which one scene apparently pushes or wipes the other from the screen—is, however, a somewhat faster-paced transition than the dissolve. It is, however, more distracting, it calls attention to itself as a dramatic trick, and the audience's attention is not so likely to follow smoothly from one scene to the next with wipes as with a dissolve.

In general, assuming that the purely mechanical means of making both types of transitions were equally available, we'd be inclined to recommend lap-dissolves for most transitions. Wipes have their uses, though, in such fast-paced visual effects as optical montages and in sequences where montage-like transitions are to synchronize with music.

## Incident vs. Reflected Light-readings

Recently I attended a meeting at which there was an interesting discussion of incident versus reflected light-readings when using exposure-meters. We were told by a representative of the General Electric Co., meter division that in some instances, as in Kodachrome flower, by measuring incident rather than reflected light, the dark foliage surrounding the bright flower will not disturb the meter-reading, and true exposure and color-rendering results. What is the experience of the members of the A.S.C.? Under what conditions do they prefer incident or reflected-light readings? Who do photographic light-means (Gretagob cell) measure reflected light, whereas conventional lighting engineers use meters to measure incident light? Isn't the strength and quality of the reflected light dependent upon the strength and quality of the incident light?

John Harber

It has been our experience that where an individual is willing to use his meter intelligently, the incident-light method is decidedly the more accurate. However, if care and intelligence aren't used in making the reading, this method can admit perhaps more inaccuracies than the reflected-light method. In this and the July issue of THE AMERICAN CINEMATOGRAPHER you will find some excellent articles on incident-light reading methods, by P. C. Smithurst, who is England's foremost exposure-metering engineer. We have used an incident-light meter of his design and gotten the most completely uniform exposures on Kodachrome that we have ever obtained by any method.

The general practice among the members of the A. S. C. is to use their meters for incident-light readings when making interiors, and for reflected-light readings when making ordinary exterior scenes. This, however, is in a considerable measure due to their methods of

For many years one of the most important services THE AMERICAN CINEMATOGRAPHER has performed for its readers has been the answering of technical questions about all phases of amateur and professional movie-making. These questions are usually answered by individual letters, to permit going into the necessary detail. However, in response to many requests, we also publish, in a condensed form, some of these questions and their answers which we believe may be of interest to other readers. THE EDITOR.

handling interior lighting. In making such scenes, it is their general custom to set the key-light, by means of an incident-light reading, to a predetermined standard. After this, they balance the shadow and fill lighting by eye, to the known correct standard. Since in most cases studio cinematographers work at a fairly standardized stop—ranging in different studios from f3.5 to f8.3—with their negative receiving standardized developments, this method of working on interiors is faster and more consistent.

In making exteriors, however, due to the constant fluctuation in natural light, they use their meters as conventional exposure meters, taking conventional reflected-light readings. Many of these would, however, possibly prefer to use the incident-light method under all conditions if equipment were available which made it conveniently possible.

As to your final question, we have talked this matter over with many exposure-meter engineers, and their attitude is this: they consider the reflective value of the scene or subject being photographed fully as important a factor in correct exposure as the strength and quality of the light falling on it. Moreover, while the advanced amateur or professional filmer can very well take this factor into consideration, the less experienced filmer—who is of course in the numerical majority, and who must needs the help a meter can give—is likely to overlook it. So by providing a meter designed mainly for reflected-light readings, they feel they are helping to minimize this error, and thus being of the greatest service to the greatest number of potential users. For the more advanced and particular user, they point out, there are several methods of making the meter more selective, not only in adapting it to incident-light readings as suggested by Smithurst and Capt. Don Newwood, but in reflected-light brightness-range methods, taking separate highlight and shadow readings, etc. Thus they feel that with one basic design they have provided a nearly fool-proof guide for the man who wants simplicity and accuracy, and a precision instrument for the man who, like yourself, wants selectivity and accuracy and can use his meter thoughtfully.

# ...THE SHOWCASE...



**Precision 2½x3¼ Kodak Medallist**

Is line with the growing demand for a camera giving a negative slightly larger than 35mm. maximum size, yet retaining the advanced precision features of the best 35mm. cameras, Eastman this month announces the Kodak Medallist, stated to be the first 2½x3¼ camera combining the ability to use roll-film, cut film, flipbacks or plates and the operating accuracy and convenience of a miniature. The new super-minimum produces 2½x3¼ negatives on 630 roll-film, 333 flipbacks or 6.5x6cm. cut film and plates, the latter feature making possible the use of Kodachrome in cut-film form.

The lens is a Kodak Ektar f4.5 of 160mm. (6-inch) focus, with all interior glass-surfaces treated. The shutter is a special model Kodak Supermatic No. 5, an exceptionally accurate bellows-less shutter of the post-train type with nine speeds ranging from 1 to 1/4000th second, plus bulb. It also has a built-in delayed-exposure mechanism, cable-release socket for remote control, and Photoflash synchronization.

The plunger-type shutter-release is on the body of the camera. After each exposure a red warning-stripe appears in a small circular window just back of the depth of field scale, indicating the shutter is not cocked. On winding the film to the next exposure or by cocking the shutter manually, the red signal disappears. Shutter and film-transport are interlocked, to prevent unintentional double-exposures. However a special, separate shutter-cocking lever enables the user to make multiple exposures without advancing the film when such shots are desired.

The lens-mount consists of two helically interthreaded tubular members which support lens and shutter rigidly, offering over 38 inches of metal-to-metal bearing surface, and giving a focal range of from 3½ feet to infinity. In this mount the lens, shutter, etc., do not rotate, but the entire unit is moved forward or back by the action of the threaded tubular doors. A coupled depth of field indicator is provided at the rear

of the camera-box, greatly simplifying depth of field readings for any lens aperture.

A built-in split-field military type rangefinder is coupled to operate automatically with the lens. The nearby viewfinder is designed to give precise correction automatically. A special focusing calibration is provided on the distance scale for use when Infra-Red film is employed.

The back of the Kodak Medallist is designed so it can be opened either to the right or the left, or completely removed to permit the use of necessary backs with cut-film, plates or flipback, and permitting ground-glass focusing. The camera is also designed so that with the proper accessories it can be used as an enlarger.

The Kodak Medallist, without accessories, is priced at \$165.00.

## **New Weston Repair Service**

Weston Electrical Instrument Corp., of Newark, N. J., manufacturers of Weston Photronic exposure-meters, has just announced to dealers a radically new service policy which should find a warm welcome among users of Weston meters. All repairs are to be handled directly at the factory, with the meter completely rebuilt and returned with a certificate of repair certifying that the meter has been placed in first-class operating condition. The nature of repair consists of expert inspection and discovery of the damage, replacement of any unusable or doubtful parts, assembly, and finally the same calibration procedure as for new meters. On older models, such as the 650, 515, etc., new data-plates of the type used on the newer "Master" model will be furnished at no extra charge.

A schedule of standardized prices for these repairs has been established. Repairs have been divided into two classifications, "Group A" Service, when extensive repairs and replacements are indicated; where cases are cracked and internal working-parts severely damaged. The maximum charge for "Group A" service is \$450. "Group B" Service is indicated where the meter, though showing no outward damage except possibly a broken glass, is either completely inoperative or reads inaccurately. This is stated to be the usual group for most repairs. The price of "Group B" service is a maximum of \$150. Occasionally it may be found that even less extensive repairs than those in the usual "Group B" service will put a meter into first-class condition; in such instances the instrument will be returned at a still lower price.

These prices are stated to apply in all cases when the meter is returned directly to the factory, and to include return parcel post charges and rewer-

nance within the U. S. parcel post zones. Air Mail or foreign postage charges are necessarily extra. Where the meter is returned to the factory through a dealer, the dealer may add a slight handling-charge; Weston, however, has recommended that this be held at a maximum of seventy-five cents.

These prices are stated to apply to all Weston exposure-meters with the exception of the older Model 517, Type 1, Model 437, Type 2, and Model 525, for which a slightly higher charge must be made. With this exception, however, the maximum charge which can be made for completely rejuvenating any Weston meter is now pegged at \$150—a most price-worthy advance in service policy.

## **"Blackout" Flashbulbs Available**

With press photographers all over the country frantically making tests with home-made infra-red flash equipment for use in possible blackouts, the Wabash Photolamp Corp. has just announced a specially designed flash bulb for the purpose to be known as the Blackest Super-flash.

The Blackout lamp, according to predictions by press photographers and officials of the U. S. Army who observed the early tests, will make history in the photographic profession, as they now make possible and completely practical for the first time instantaneous photography in total darkness with "invisible light." The proverbial "black cat in a coal pile on a stormy night" can now be photographed without even knowing he has been posing for a picture. Besides the obvious use in time of blackouts, the new lamp has many other applications where ordinary visible flash cannot be used. A few instances of these applications are darkened theaters and night clubs, courtrooms, public lectures, symphony concerts, photographic darkness, etc.

Essentially, the new Wabash Blackout lamp is a hydrocarbon wire-filament Super-flash treated and coated with a specially prepared black infra-red filter which dries hard as nails and cannot be damaged by any mechanical, chemical, or atmospheric conditions normally encountered by flash bulbs in any part of the United States. This black infra-red coat serves to hold back the "visible" light produced by the flash. It transmits only the infra-red rays which are invisible to the eye but which register instantly on film when special infra-red sensitive film is used in the camera. Even in total darkness no visible light is shown when the flash goes off.

In application, the lamp can be used in practically any type of reflector, but the best type of results have been

(Continued on Page 408)

The Hollywood Reporter  
Preview Poll  
*for June —*

## BEST PHOTOGRAPHY

*By popular vote of The Critics —*

# "BLOSSOMS IN THE DUST"

*The Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Production*

*in*

TECHNICOLOR

*Photographed By*

KARL FREUND, A.S.C.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

*and*

W. HOWARD GREENE, A.S.C.

FOR TECHNICOLOR



KARL FREUND, A.S.C.



W. HOWARD GREENE, A.S.C.

EASTMAN FILMS  
BRULATOUR SERVICE



## SCENARIO FOR

# A BACK-YARD COMEDY

By CLAUDE W. A. CADARETTE

Revised, L. A. Free Club

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Here's a production-tested scenario for a real "back-yard movie." Produced as a 16-foot film, real, it was a prize-winner for shortfilm Cadarette is a contest held recently by the Los Angeles Free Club. If longer footage is desired, it can easily be expanded in several places, as, for instance, the introduction, in which "Deakes" wife could be introduced, sternly scolding him out to mow the lawn, and in the final chase sequence, which can very easily be built up to greater footage than the few shots used here, and show the two men chasing each other around the house and across the lawn, falling over garden tools, etc. And of course if you want to go in for real, old-fashioned slapstick, there's a natural opportunity in the scene where "Deakes" starts at his shapely new neighbor, and forgets to look which way his hose is squirting—)

**Scene 1.** Medium-shot of a girl carrying a large box. On the side of the box is lettered the **Main Title:** "THE NEW NEIGHBOR." After ample time for reading this, the girl turns and shows an end of the box on which is lettered the credit-line, in this case: "By Cadarette." The Girl exits. **FADE OUT.**

**Scene 2. FADE IN.** Medium close shot of hose and handle of lawn-mower. Fan right is shown Joe Deakes stretched comfortably on the lawn, snoozing, with his head pillowed against the lawn-mower's wheel. He stirs, sits up and stretches.

**Scene 3.** Long-shot. Deakes gets up, stretches again, grasps handle of lawn-mower and starts it toward the camera.

**Scene 4.** Close-up of mower, moving from right to left.

**Scene 5.** Close-up of mower, moving from left to right.

**Scene 6.** Close-up of mower, shot from low camera-angle. Mower comes directly into camera.

**Scene 7.** Medium-shot, from low angle. In foreground on a box or stand can be seen a box of bug-killer, some garden trowels, etc. The mower and Deakes enter from right in background, apparently through with the lawn mowing. Deakes leaves the mower, and advances toward camera, picking up the trowels.

**Scene 8.** Close-up of Deakes, as he looks at the two trowels, deciding which one he wants to use.

**Scene 9.** Inset close-up of box. Hand places the larger trowel on the box.

**Scene 10.** Long-shot. Deakes advances toward the camera, and squats down by a small tree or shrub. He stoaches out lazily and starts to dig the dirt around the shrub's trunk. He looks up and sees something interesting out of the picture.

**Scene 11.** Low-angle medium-shot, through picket fence. The very attractive legs of a pretty girl (the new neighbor) clad in a sun-suit, pass by.

**Scene 12.** Same as **Scene 10.** Deakes exhibits great interest in this addition to the view. He gets up and goes over to where the lass is lying.

**Scene 13.** Long-shot of the new neighbor moving about her yard.

**Scene 14.** Medium-shot of Deakes, having the lawn very absent-mindedly and staring offstage with a fatuous expression.

**Scene 15.** Medium long-shot. Deakes' pal, Sam Smith, comes around the corner of the house. He starts to wave a cheery greeting, but stops as he sees the situation. Then he ducks quickly into the back porch.

**Scene 16.** Long-shot. In the foreground,

Deakes is still absent-mindedly mowing the lawn, while in the background Sam steals along the porch until he reaches the house. He kneels by the hose.

**Scene 17.** Close-up of Sam, kneeling. He jerks up the hose in both hands and bends it tightly, shutting off the flow of water.

**Scene 18.** Close-up of hose nozzle. The water flow suddenly dwindles and stops.

**Scene 19.** Medium close-shot, from low angle. Deakes slowly discovers something is wrong with the hose. He looks down at the nozzle, pointing it up at his face, wondering what's wrong.

**Scene 20.** Close-up of Sam, same as **Scene 17.** He grins, and suddenly lets go of the hose.

**Scene 21.** Close-up of Joe Deakes, still looking down at the nozzle, wondering what's wrong. Suddenly the water squirts out and showers him boisterously, knocking off his hat. He waves the hose wildly, looking around and sees Sam, then slams the hose down and runs out of scene to left.

**Scene 22.** Medium-shot of the new neighbor, kneeling for a flower-bomb in her yard. She looks up and, offstage, sees what is happening in the next yard, and laughs (You can add a close-up of her laughing face if you wish.)

**Scene 23.** Deakes chases Sam madly across the yard.

**Scene 24.** Long-shot down driveway. Sam, hotly pursued by Joe Deakes, dashes into picture from right, around corner of house, and down driveway, across the street, and along opposite drive, finally disappearing into back-yard of house opposite. **FADE OUT.**

**Scene 25.** Close-up of box used for main title. It is now lettered

THE END.

However you define

# QUALITY

You'll find it in

## CINÉ-KODAK FILM

**CHECK** your conception of film quality against these basic characteristics of Ciné-Kodak Film.—

### FINE GRAIN

For clear, clean-cut images on larger screens, it's essential that the emulsion of the film be scientifically produced and processed to yield and maintain minimum grain. Ciné-Kodak films enjoy that advantage.

### PANCHROMATISM

For the most natural black-and-white rendering of color, for most accurate response to light, wide-band panchromatic sensitivity is essential. All Ciné-Kodak films are highest type panchromatics.

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To obtain maximum speed without maximum grain is a tough problem. But in such Ciné-Kodak films as 16-mm Super-XX and 8-mm Super-X you'll find the latest and best solution of that problem.

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Ifs a matter of contrast, of latitude, of resolving power or sharpness—all characteristics brought to high refinement in Ciné-Kodak films and maintained in their processing.

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In full color, Kodachrome's unique capability and ease of use are universally hailed and enjoyed.

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All Ciné-Kodak films are Kodak-processed without added charge. Their uniform reliability is a quality beyond price, yet prices for all Ciné-Kodak films are attractive and, in terms of value, truly economical.

All this you may possibly have discovered for yourself. Veteran movie makers never forget it.



★ EASTMAN KODAK COMPANY, ROCHESTER, N. Y. ★

## BUSINESS MOVIES

### UNSUNG HEROES.

Advertising-documentary, 1200-feet Kodachrome, sound.

Presented by Westinghouse Electrical Mfg. Co.

Produced by The Calbra Co.  
Recorded on Herold-Manner 16mm. recording equipment; Kodachrome displaying by The Calbra Co.

IF this picture of the making and inspections of a Westinghouse refrigerator were in 16mm. Technicolor and here the name of some top-flight Hollywood major studio like MGM on its credit title, it might be possible to find enough major technical flaws to make that review critical and interesting. But "Unsung Heroes" is an example of 16mm. all the way through—photography, sound, special-effects, etc.—so we can only say it is the most completely professional example of 16mm. production our reviewers have ever seen.

From start to finish the film has the sort of professional smoothness you expect in a Hollywood major-studio production, but seldom encounter in 16mm. business films. It starts out with a beautifully professional example of pre-recording—a lip-synchronized dolly-shot of a "gay 19's" couple riding a "bicycle built for two" and singing. From this delightful opening, while technique and continuity encounter harder going as they tackle the problem of explaining the manufacture and testing of electrical refrigerators to the general audience, the film carries on excellently and interestingly.

Only a few critical suggestions come to mind; none of them of major importance. We would suggest, though, that since the sequence in which the housewife and the manufacturer are shown in close shots asking themselves questions follows the opening, lip-synchronized sequence so clearly, these shots should also have been lip-synchronized. Also, in some of the office scenes of dark-dressed men around a conference-table, a bit more light on their clothes (possibly from arcs, if such were available) would have been helpful; similarly more rim-lighting on people shown against dark backgrounds would make them stand out better.

But in general, "Unsung Heroes" is outstanding. The special photographic effects—optical wipes, montages, etc., could not have been achieved in a Hollywood studio. The sound-track is without doubt the finest recording we have yet heard on 16mm. While a rather light track, it none the less had almost double the volume either our reviewers or the professional (an experienced 16mm. sound engineer) had ever before heard from a 16mm. track. The quality was excellent, and the volume-levels perfectly uniform from start to finish—high tribute to an excellent re-recording job of the sort seldom seen in 16mm. The Kodachrome-dupé sound print was the finest we've yet seen.

## Photography of the Month

Continued from Page 175

After Jesse Lasky worked and waited patiently for 23 years for an opportunity to bring it to the screen—and we can be thankful for every minute of that delay, for the "Sergeant York" that 1941's artistic and technical advances made possible is an infinitely better and more moving document than the best 1919 could have done.

The production camerawork is in itself a tribute to what today's technical resources made it possible for Director of Photography Sol Polito, A.S.C., to do. With the exception of an incredibly few establishing and atmospheric shots, all of these scenes—including the remarkably convincing farm and mountain exteriors of the Three Forks of the Wolf—were filmed indoors on Warner Bros.' huge Stage 1. And there could hardly be a more convincing demonstration of the value of today's methods and resources, to say nothing of the great technical and artistic skill of Cinematographer Polito, than the way these sequences appear on the screen. They are all dramatically important, and thanks to the way they were made on the stage, Polito has been able to control every factor of composition and lighting to bring to each scene the maximum dramatic effect, and do it in a way far superior to anything that could have been done outdoors, especially on location.

The storm sequences are noteworthy examples of their kind, and among the most convincing storms we've ever seen on the screen. Again, filming these scenes on the stage proved conclusively superior to anything that could have been done outside.

Polito's camera-treatment of the story itself is outstanding, though it will inevitably be generally overlooked because of the outstanding character of story and performance, and even because of the great technical achievements Polito has accomplished in filming his exteriors as he has. Yet his camera-treatment is magnificently keyed to the mood of his story—the story of a simple man who struggled mightily with himself and finally did great things. Polito's treatment is appropriately simple, too. Yet it is powerful; it strikes each character strongly and undeniably, though without any trace of theatricality.

The photographic direction of the battle sequences could not have been entrusted to more capable hands than those of Arthur Edson, A.S.C. His past experience on many notable films of this type make it certain that his contribution would be noteworthy; but we doubt if even he has achieved more greatly on such scenes than he does in this production. He has avoided all the photographic clichés of conventional World War I battle scenes, and kept his treatment, like Polito's, perfectly matched to the simple, sincere character of the story. Yet these scenes mark as being

more exciting than many a more-publicized film battle.

A great deal of credit must be given Art Director John Haghea, whose work on the sets—including those spectacular stage-built exteriors—is of the highest order. Much praise, too, must be given Director Howard Hawks who in "Sergeant York" has turned out the sort of picture the movie store publicized Frank Capra intended to in "John Doe"—and didn't. Finally, we want to see "Sergeant York" again, for it is one of those rarely great films which should be seen and studied and enjoyed.

## FORCED LANDING

MCA-Parmenter Production.

Director of Photography: John Allen, A.S.C.

Special Photographic Effects by: Fred H. Jackman, Jr., A.S.C.

"Forced Landing" isn't one of those pictures that was blessed with a generous schedule and budget. Its cost could probably be expressed in five figures, and if its shooting schedule exceeded a dozen days we'd be very much surprised. But thanks to the artistic skill and careful pre-production planning that Director of Photography John Allen, A.S.C., and Director Gordon Willis brought to its making, it can hold its own in company with out of its actual class. About the only thing that strikes it as one of Hollywood's lesser products is some momentarily bad dialogue.

But from the strictly cinematic point of view, "Forced Landing" is a picture that deserves study. It is uncommonly aggressive visually; every scene is a better-than-usual composition which is not only pleasing to the eye, but dramatically powerful. To the untrained eye, it is also an absorbing object-lesson in what skilled camera men can do to bring "production value" out of microscopic physical resources.

Cinematographer Allen's contribution is excellent. He handles his people very favorably—so small task when working on a quickie schedule—and makes the most of every potential opportunity. Some day some astute producer is going to give that main Allen "A" picture—maybe even a well-nourished "B"—and we're likely to see a new photographic star on the horizon.

The special-effects work by Fred Jackman, Jr., A.S.C., is another highlight of the film—inferiorly superior to the indifferent process-work on the same producers' earlier "Power Drive." With the single exception of one scene in which Jackman was forced to use a background-plate reversed from right to left, his contribution is of definitely major-value calibre.

All told, "Forced Landing" is both technically and artistically a credit to all concerned—and entertaining, to boot.

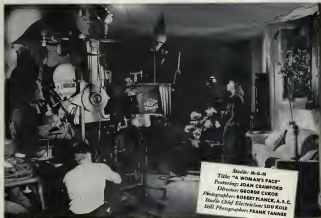
## THE STARS LOOK DOWN

Grafton Film: MGM Release (Produced in England).

Director of Photography: Maitz Grossmann and Henry Harris.

In this scene from the new M-G-M feature "A Woman's Face," you see

## THE LATEST TECHNIQUE IN DRAMATIC "MODELLING"



## ...WITH G-E MAZDA LAMPS IN "INKIES"



• When we asked John Arnold, head of the Camera Department at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer for some pictures showing the use of lighting in black-and-white photography, he gave us this shot from the production "A Woman's Face."

Few pictures could show more clearly the application of the latest technique in modelling lights. See what flexibility you have with G-E MAZDA lamps in inkie equipment... all the lights you want, to create the effect you need, even in limited space.

Thanks to today's equipment, you can control G-E MAZDA lamps beautifully to hit just the spots you want to emphasize. They're good for process work, for special effects, and for color. They go into action fast, to help you speed shooting schedules. And among the 9,000 different types and sizes of G-E MAZDA lamps are many that help to produce almost any effect you want. Are you using them to help you? General Electric Company, Nela Park, Cleveland, Ohio.

**GENERAL  ELECTRIC**  
**MAZDA LAMPS**

"The Stars Look Down," so we understand, was filmed in England within the last eighteen months. And it is a most unusual picture. Laid among the "north-country" coal-mines, all of the film's exterior was filmed in an actual mining community. So, too, most parts of its interiors, which have every appearance of having been built as "practical" interiors on location. It is fairly hard to believe that the exterior backgrounds of these scenes may have been put in by skillful process-photography, but if they were, they show a skill equalled by only one of two top-rank specialists in Hollywood, and vastly ahead of anything we've seen from Europe.

The cinematographers, Muri Greenbaum and Henry Harris, have done a notable job, and one that is ideally in keeping with the look and mood of the story. They have very capably avoided giving their scenes conventional "studio" lightings, and kept—very appropriately—a realistic mood which rare suggests a documentary than a staged production. Yet at the same time they have handled their players and sets very capably indeed. Their treatment of the coal-mine sequences—invariably filmed in the studio—is particularly processworthy, especially the scenes of the disaster.

Art-Director James Carter also deserves credit for very competent and tasteful work, as does Director Carol Reed. The recording, by Norman Delano, suffers somewhat from the common failing of many foreign pictures in that it is at a rather lower volume-level than we are usually accustomed to, and possibly made with the microphones farther from the actors than wisdom for the best recording.

"The Stars Look Down" is by no means a cheery film, but one that is well worth seeing—especially since it marks the reappearance of one of our favorite character-actresses, Nana Price.

## MANPOWER

Warner Bros. Production.

Director of Photography: Ernest Haller, A.S.C.

Special Photographic Effects: Eysa Haskin, A.S.C. and Hans Koenekamp, A.S.C.

"Manpower" marks a distinct photographic departure—and a most welcome one—for Marlene Dietrich's starring vehicles. It is the first Dietrich film in many a long year in which the action does not proceed step by step for the instruction of ultra-glittered close-ups of that photogenic lady. We've an idea Director of Photography Ernest Haller, A.S.C., and Director Raoul Walsh deserve joint credit for this, which makes the film infinitely stronger as a picture.

That is not to say that Haller hasn't treated Miss Dietrich very well indeed. He has; but by suppressing the glamour-camera, he has given her a better chance than she has enjoyed in a long time to do the acting of which she is

really capable. She should be thankful.

While the action is kept throughout in a rough-and-ready mood, Haller uses the low camera to make "Manpower" visually effective. This is perhaps most notable in the several sequences showing the power company's line crews at work in stormy weather. That these scenes were filmed indoors, on the stage, is a really notable achievement, for they are some of the most convincing storms we've ever seen on the screen. Haller, and his associates, Haskin and Koenekamp, deserve a world of credit for what they've done.

## HOLD THAT GHOST

Universal Production.

Director of Photography: Elwood Bradley, A.S.C. and Joseph Valentine, A.S.C.

When "Hold That Ghost" was previewed, there was a slight conflict in the film's photographic credits. On the screen, credit was extended solely to Cinematographer Bradley, as the studio's official printed credits, both Bradley and Valentine were credited. As we understand it, when the film was originally made (immediately following the filming, but before the release of "Back Street") Bradley directed the photography. Later, after the Abbott and Costello team had made such a sweeping success, the film was put back into work for the addition of the "production value" introductory and closing sequences with Ted Lewis, Maucha Auer, and the Andrews Sisters, with Valentine at the camera.

In any event, both cinematographers have done excellently. Valentine's contributions are excellently pictorial, and again he does wonders with the by no means photogenic Andrews Sisters—even better, in fact, than he did in their previous appearance in "In The Navy."

Bradley's handling of the production should advance his prestige many a notch upward. The greater part of the action takes place in a haunted house, with the inevitable effect-lightings and a locale which inspires. Bradley handles these very artistically, yet in a skillfully that no comedy actor is lost because of his pictorial shadowing—a more than processworthy achievement. To this writer, as apparently to many of the preview audience, a standout scene was that in which Costello, innocently seeking the missing Charlie Smith on the basement of the abandoned inn, fearing to come down into the basement, stands at the head of the stairs and quavers "Oh, Charlie." This scene is played entirely in an effect-lighted long-shot—with the star shows only by his feet and a long shadow. This concept, together with Bradley's lighting, makes the scene infinitely more effective and amusing than any more literal treatment could.

Bradley deals excellently with the players, presenting the two feminine principals—Evelyn Ankers and Joan Davis—in special advantage.

The print previewed seemed, even for low-key effect-lightings, a trifle darker than was altogether pleasing. This was particularly true in the opening and closing sequences, in which the foot-candles were distinctly poor. It would seem that—especially in these sequences—the release prints could do advantage be lightened by one or even two print-lights.

## RINGSIDE MAISE

MGM Production.

Director of Photography: Charles Lawton, Jr., A.S.C.

Cinematographer Lawton's contribution to this, the latest of the "Maize" series, is a distinguished one. It is in many ways reminiscent of the style of his former teacher and associate, George Faleay, A.S.C., and for a better job than he did on his previous release, "The Big Store."

His treatment of the players is, as always, excellent, and the film and its settings give him excellent opportunities for creating visual mood, of which he takes full advantage. There are some excellent exterior, and in several sequences some very good effect-lighting.

The unimpaired special-effects work is good, though in some of the scenes where Ann Rutherford and Robert Sterling are seen riding in the station-wagon the perspective of foreground and background-photos are rather badly out of coordination. This is especially noticeable in the shots where the car is supposed to be negotiating curving roads.

## WIDE OPEN TOWN

Harry Sherman Production; Paramount Release.

Director of Photography: Russell Harlan, A.S.C.

Director of Photography Russell Harlan, A.S.C., has given this "western" a very creditable photographic meaning. Filmed in the picturesque country around Lone Pine, California, at the feet of Mt. Whitney, Harlan has some of the most spectacular outdoor locations in the country at his disposal, and he brings them to the screen in a way that should interest any lover of fine exterior photography. His compositions and filming are outstanding. As regards the latter, especially, he deserves credit. So often in working on a location of this nature there is a temptation to enhance the pictorial effect by over-flaring in the pictorial long-shots—a pitfall which, of course, makes the closer shots, in which for the preservation of fine-tones, overexposure cannot well be used, stand out as unpleasantly different from the inherent long-shots. But Harlan wisely keeps his flaring tastefully conservative, and close-ups and long-shots match up very smoothly.

His treatment of the film's interiors is also commendable. Simple and straightforward, his compositions and lightings are none the less capably handled.



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# EASTMAN NEGATIVE FILMS

## Design for the Camera

[Continued from Page 147]

originality was the fact that he did something so supremely logical most of the rest of us never think of doing it. Coming into film-production "cold," with no previous experience, he obtained the services of Gregg Toland, A.S.C., one of the industry's most brilliant directors of photography, and made full use of his experience in visual dramatization. "Citizen Kane" was in production for some 15 or 16 weeks—but before starting camerawork, Toland spent an additional eight or ten weeks preparing the script with Welles, and co-ordinating the physical aspects of production with Art-Director Perry Ferguson. This wasn't accidental—and because of it, "Citizen Kane's" amazing artistic and technical vitality weren't accidental either!

I have no means of knowing whether a sketched scene-plot such as I've described was used, but the principle, in any event, was there, and paid dividends. And as an incidental side-light on the benefits this thorough-going co-operation yielded, let me point out that in his article on the film's production in the February issue of THE AMERICAN CINEMATOPHAGIST, Toland remarked that Art-Director Ferguson constructed the production's 110 sets for the remarkably small expenditure of \$50,000.

To my mind, this could be possible only because their pre-production planning had shown Welles, Toland and Ferguson exactly what angles and compositions were to be used on every bit of action, so that each set could be designed strictly for the compositions that were to be filmed on it, with no wasted construction left over for "production-shots." Everything built, I am sure, reached the screen; and in some instances, such as the "Xanadu" set, this careful planning clearly permitted the camera to suggest things which no degree of liberal (and expensive) set-construction could have put over so effectively.

About this point I seem to hear a voice or two remarking that a system like this is possible on a film like "Citizen Kane," budgeted at well over the million-dollar mark, but it would be commercially impractical on an average program film. But—I have just utilized it on a program film, "Forced Landing," which had a budget very considerably less than even that of "Citizen Kane's." And a shooting schedule of ten days! "Forced Landing" has received a very flattering reception from both critics and public, a reception which I feel is not so much a tribute to the individual skill of any of us who made the picture as to the practical workability of the system of pre-production visualization we used. It enabled us to put much more in pictorial effectiveness on the screen than would have been possible otherwise, and—more

important—to make each frame of film a more dramatically vital composition than could have been possible conventionally.

I read about that production consultation did not permit an extensive production conference between Director of Photography John Alton, A.S.C., Art-Director F. Paul Sylve, the writers, producers, and myself as might be desired. But there was at any rate enough so the picture was much the better for it.

Here's how we worked. Every scene and set-up in "Forced Landing" was broken down into its inherent visual compositions, and sketched, as shown in the illustration on Page 166. This gave us a complete script in visual form.

Then we made recordings of the dialog, using stock players as vocal stand-ins. Playing these recordings while we studied the sketches that went with each shot gave us a virtually complete pre-production "rehearsal" of the picture before a single inch of film had been exposed. We studied and re-studied this, breaking things down, tearing scenes, dialog and compositions apart and putting them back together again until we felt we had achieved the strongest visual and spoken presentation possible in the time at our disposal.

With this visual presentation set, we built our sets. And because we knew exactly what compositions were going to be shot on each, we were able to build economically. We built precisely what the camera—in a specified set-up and with a specified lens—would take in, and no more. Repeatedly, if the camera had been moved a small fraction of an inch, or a lens used with an angle as degree or so wider, our shot would have showed something far removed from our mythical Latin-American background!

Several of our interests were built on revolving platforms inside the stages. The lighting set-up—pre-planned by Director of Photography Alton—was fixed on paralleling completely independent of the set-construction. So when we finished with that set, the revolving platform gave a twist, and a new set was spun into place beneath the lighting set-up. Turning off a few overhead lamps here, turning on a few there, and moving into place a museum number of floor sails—and Alton was ready to shoot! In several instances, too, we collaborated in leading on set-lighting, painting in leading shadows and highlights. With this, a salesman of "artistic" lighting pretty well took care of the act, and all Alton had to worry about was the personal lighting on the players.

Cheating?—Of course! But it was cheating with a purpose—to make the most of everything we had available to work with, to the end that we might put on the screen the most completely effective picture possible. And unlike the kind of "cheating" so often done on productions where schedule and budget offer restrictions, it wasn't a

matter of "cheating" blindly, in the hope that we'd get away with it; instead, it was working with a carefully-planned purpose, knowing at every turn what we were doing, and what we could put on the screen.

Frankly, both Alton and I found it made our work easier, and brought us both greater credit for turning out a picture that had greater "production value" and more dramatic impact than is usual in the short-schedule field. With all due credit to the efforts of our very talented staff, I am convinced they could not have produced half the dramatic impression they did had they not had the advantage of this thoroughly pre-planned visual presentation, which made their efforts count doubly.

And that we followed out our plan is, I think, clearly indicated by a comparison of the sketch shown on Page 166 and the production still of the same scene shown on the opposite page. Minor details of costuming, set-decoration, and the like naturally differ, and the groupings differ since the still was made of a slightly later phase of the action than shown by the sketch. But the basic composition is there—and as, too, is the dramatic "punch" we visualized when we planned our camera and directorial treatment of that particular action.

So successfully did these ideas work out on "Forced Landing" that I am planning to carry the plan a step further on my next production. In addition to the sketches and the recording of dialog by stock players, I am planning to supplement the sketches by making "Leica" stills of the various compositions as enacted by stock players—in some cases supplementing the sketches, in others perhaps replacing them. In this way, we can then take the producers into a projection-room and give them as the screen a complete eye-and-ear preview of their production before shooting starts.

It may be objected by some short-sighted people that all this pre-production planning would necessitate greater pre-shooting expenditures. I don't think there would be enough to make any difference. The director, the art-director and in all probability the writers are already on salary; the added cost of calling the director of photography into such consultation a few days ahead of the start of shooting on a program picture, or even a week or so in the case of a larger picture, is certainly not prohibitive even if the cinematographer involved were one of the industry's highest-salaried artists. At most it could only amount to a few hundred dollars. And it would save that many times over in more economical set-construction and more efficient work all around on the set. And if would, as we have proved, pay an incalculable bonus in a better, more forceful picture put on the screen with less effort. END.

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## Lighting Switchboard

(Continued from Page 344)

master, a numbered amber pilot light is up by the master handle.

Around the center of the board is a row of calibrated, interlocking dimmer



handles. Four of these control Ward Leonard 110-slip, 1000-2000-Watt rated dimmers. These dimmers have a capacity of 3000 Watts but will dim a 1000-Watt load without any ballast. When a 500-Watt ballast is connected across them they will dim a 500-Watt load completely out.

The large handle on the right is the master handle.

Directly below these dimmer handles are the circuit switches. These are Frank Adams theatre switches and they are two-pole double-throw with off position. They are rated at 30 amps. When this switch is in the up position, the circuit is on "hot" without the dimmer. The center portion is off, and the down position connects the dimmer into the circuit.

Below that switch is a fuse and a green pilot-light, indicating when the control circuit is on.

In the bottom row is the ballast switch with its read pilot light.

The line switch in the lower right-hand corner is a Mohr-Richardson break type switch such as is used on their 150 amp. arcs.

Klieg pockets are installed in the side of the console for each of the dimmer circuits as well as various "hot" outlets. A dummy plug is inserted in pocket No. 8 when it is being used as the master.

The entire equipment is mounted on an iron framework covered with sheet

steel with sheet-xy vibrating inserts. Doors are provided to give access to the dimmer contacts and the ballast lamps. The front panels are of bakelite duralumin. The chassis is mounted on cast-iron wheels and has a tongue for towing, and lifting bars on the sides.

A small work light is also provided to aid the operator in setting the calibration marks on the dimmer handles.

END.

## Background Action

(Continued from Page 344)

particularly few patterns may actually be there.

We can use the same trick—and get the same result—in filming scenes of a similar nature. Properly grouped, a skillful director or cinematographer can make an economically small handful of extras seem like a much larger crowd.

As a matter of fact, I have only once seen an actual crowd packed tightly together like sardines. That was some years ago in Naples, when I saw Mussolini addressing an enormous audience in that city's great square. But everywhere else, I've noticed that no matter how many people get together, regardless of race, color or nationality, the average human likes a bit of elbow-room, even in a crowd. It's a psychological fact we can put to work to good advantage in filming our crowd scenes!

Another highly important aspect of coordinating the background and foreground elements of a scene is avoiding distracting focal contrasts. This is a particularly tedious thing for a director to guard against, for he is not likely to know the photographic values of fabrics, etc., as thoroughly as does his colleague at the camera. Therefore, when the director is picking out extras to carry on background action in closer shots of his principals, he will, if he is wise, check this detail thoroughly with his director of photography. And the man at the camera should certainly tell him, if this advice isn't asked, that this girl in the blue dress is likely to make a distracting, light-toned spot in the background, and it would be better to use that other one in the photographically darker green costume.

This detail is becoming increasingly important in making Technicolor pictures. The color camera, as we're beginning to learn, has peculiar affinities for certain colors. And these affinities do not always coincide with the visual appearance of a fabric. Often two fabrics which are visually very dissimilar—darkened—shades will photograph quite differently.

I think this was well brought out in THE AMERICAN CINEMATOPHILE'S review of a recent Technicolor production, in which it was pointed out that in one scene an extra girl, wearing a certain shade of blue, repeatedly distracted attention from the star simply because of the peculiarly penetrating quality of that particular shade of blue. This was true, even though the blue-clad extra was positioned some thirty or forty feet

behind the star! A costume of almost any other coloring, to the color-experts tell me, would have been inconspicuous in that scene, but that particular shade of blue caught and held the eye even though one of the industry's most attractive feminine stars was singing in the immediate foreground.

In checking these and innumerable similar details, the services of an alert operative cameraman are available to both director and cinematographer. The director is usually busy with the principals. The director of photography is usually equally busy with his gaffer, arranging the lighting. But the cameraman operator acts these with his eye glued to the finder—and if that eye is really open, he can often detect these flaws before either director or cinematographer have a chance to notice them. Therefore, while the operator is usually classed as the cinematographer's right-hand man, I feel he can be fully as valuable to the Director, too. An operative, for example, like Maurice Germaine, who has operated the camera for Milton Krasser, A.S.C., on our last two productions, and is both willing and able to make constructive suggestions to both of us, is a real asset to any troupe. After all, even though director and cinematographer may take the greatest pains to avoid any of these compositional conflicts between foreground and background action, checking the scene through the finder before each take, and riding the boom or dolly, the operator is the only man who is actually following the scene through the finder during the take—and he is the only man who can accurately spot these little mistakes before they show up on the screen!

In closing, I hope that this necessarily brief discussion of one of the detail problems confronting both director and cinematographer may prove of constructive value to members of both professions. We can all use more such discussions, from members of both crafts, for only as we all of us work together can we come closer to our joint goal of making consistently better pictures. END.

## Canada's War Movies

(Continued from Page 239)

dared films which actually had widespread theatre circulation and for which rental was paid by theatres.

"The River," "The Fight for Life," chalked up extensive theatre circulation.

John Grierson in his work for Canada is doing what Paul Lorenz did in the U.S., with the additional advantage of having a determination and a need to produce on schedule and not for art's sake alone. Lorenz hardly ever figured on regulated time and effort as essential to full success, but Grierson has included driving power to maintain a production schedule in his National Film Board set-up.

Keeping pace with the March of Time, Grierson produces and releases on schedule a different feature each month on the

Canadian War Effort. Like the March of Time, the National Film Board started out with its own editorial staff, but without camera units or processing plants. Both conceived, planned and directed pictures but farmed out the camera and laboratory work. Like the March of Time, the National Film Board since June, 1941, has had its own laboratory and camera crews on its direct staff. However, the work of the National Film Board has become so extensive that it still needs to engage the services of commercial producers to handle additional productions and technical work under National Film Board direction.

In addition to scheduled monthly production work, the National Film Board covers a far greater activity past the era of war into peace and reconstruction of the future. It plans to use film to achieve and cement the interest of the common man and woman in public affairs and in the daily life of Canadians.

The National Film Board enjoys the complete backing of the Government. In the Spring of 1939 the Dominion Parliament passed the National Film Act which authorized the establishment of the National Film Board consisting of the Minister of Trade and Commerce, one other member of the Privy Council of Canada, three representatives divided among various and three laymen. It was this Board which named John Grierson as Film Commissioner.

Some of the outstanding releases which Grierson's staff has produced and released for the "Canada Carries On" series are, "Atlantic Patrol," portraying the part that Canadian Destroyers are playing in the Battle of the Atlantic; "Home Front," which shows women in their part; "Front of Steel," and "Wings of Youth," "Churchill's Island," "Strategy of Metals," "People of Canada," "Guard of the North," etc.

In short, the National Film Board comes into the Government Production field much as an efficiency-expert enters a factory to track down leakage of surplus and effort or to superimpose and coordinate activity so that the maximum use of efficiency may be realized with the means at command.

For example, should the National Parks Bureau decide that they needed a film to carry on their particular work, they will consult with the Government Film Commissioner and decide how the money they have available can be spent to the greatest advantage. Likewise if the Agriculture Department might want to explain the value of tree-planting and wind-breaks on the prairie, or the National Galleries may want to show how Canadian artists work, the idea is submitted to the National Film Board first.

Backed by a long experience in production and distribution, Grierson is thus able first to plan a production that will use to the fullest extent the power of real motion picture technique, and second, one which will squarely meet the competitive requirements of films for theatre as well as non-theatrical distribution. END

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### Underwater Movies

(Continued from Page 121)

enough to function an ordinary open-air shot unpleasantly, falters out an underwater shot so much more that it is completely unmanageable.

As regards exposure, we found that our Weston meters were quite as accurate reading on an underwater scene from the camera-bell as they are for ordinary open-air shots. We simply held the meter close to the glass porthole, took the meter-reading, and followed it in the usual way. The results were perfect.

Focusing, as is well known, proved a

more difficult problem. Fortunately Len Smith, A.S.C., in studying the previous Tarsan film's underwater scenes, had given us ample data to simplify this problem: The refraction of the magnifying light rays passing through the water tends to "bend" the focus forward (away from the lens), so that if you are filming an object, say nine meters far away from the lens, and focus your camera at that distance, your point of actual focus will fall three or four feet behind the point you want to focus.

Therefore we made it a rule in filming our underwater scenes to focus the camera at a point 15% closer than the actual

subject-distances. In the case of an object 9 feet from the lens, for example, we would set the focus at the 6-foot calibration—and the scene would be in perfect focus.

Obviously it was impossible to run an actual tape underwater from camera to submerged subject; sometimes we could, however, measure the distance on the surface, measuring from the camera-bell to a boat rowed out to the point where we knew "Tarzan" Weissmiller was scheduled to dive into the water. More often, though, we took these measurements above water with a "Leica" optical rangefinder, lapped off one-third to compensate for refraction, and shot. The results, we found, were equally accurate—so much so as to make one wonder if a similar rangefinder might not be a time-saving accessory for many shots in the studio. Assistant Baldwin, by the way, deserves a great deal of credit for the way he executed the many complicated follow-focus shots in the cramped space of the camera-bell as he followed Weissmiller and the others swimming and diving toward and away from the lens.

Many of the required shots demanded a considerable amount of panning—and, as I have said, the restricted use of the camera-part made the camera's actual range of movement very limited. So we finally conceived the idea of peering the entire photographing bell. We used the old reliable adhesive tape—that invaluable accessory without which no modern camera-man ever attempts to work—to provide a sighting-mark on the top of the camera-tube. This tape was lined up directly with the lens. To pan the camera, it was only necessary to keep this sighting-strip in line with the underwater actors, who were clearly visible from above through the clear water.

Skilful work on the part of Operative Lane compensated for any minor errors in rotating the camera-tube. I've heard of plenty of times where a Director of Photography peered his camera, and some with him "peered" his operative—but this is the first instance I've ever known where he could pan both—literally—at the same time!

Another unusual phase of our work was "breasting" the underwater suits. Wherever possible we saw to it that our men had a background of clear, white sand. Then, to get a feeling of depth, we "dressed" the scene with dark, natural objects such as water plants, weeds, logs and so on. Each of these had, as a rule, to be carefully "planted" in the desired spot. In this, as in innumerable other details of our underwater movie-making, the cooperation of the resort's manager, the famous underwater swimmer Newton Perry, proved invaluable. He has probably appeared in more underwater films than any other swimmer, and has, I believe, descended to greater depths without the use of a diving helmet than anyone else. The much-publicized pearl-divers of the South Seas are no more at home under water than he—and when he and Weissmiller both sported about under the surface it was really a sight worth seeing!

A particularly amusing part of the daily routine was the way Perry would clear away the small underwater growths and sediment which would appear as smudges on our set's white sand floor. With a pair of huge, webbed "swimming feet" attached to his feet, he would swim slowly along the bottom, gently sweeping the sand with his huge rubber toes, looking for all the world like one of Walt Disney's more fanciful creations!

One of the most amusing and effective

shots that we made was one of the baby elephant, Balu, swimming underwater, with "Tarzan" Weissmiller, "Mrs. Tarzan," and "Tarzan, Jr." (Johnny Sheffield) stroking along to complete the procession. The elephant's whole body was under water—trunk and all—and to see his eye peering at you, while his four stumpy legs beat the water, is really a most unusual sight. To my mind it is a highlight among the many unusual underwater shots—some of them individually perhaps more spectacular—that we made. See if you don't agree with me when you see it in the completed picture!

## Joe Valentine

(Continued from Page 372)

typed as today's emotion and location specialists who, until a chance assignment to picture calling for spectacular exteriors, were regarded as interior specialists!

Joe Valentine's comments on versatility are more than just conversation. His work bears them out. For the last half-dozen years he has been one of Universal's top-ranking glass-on-spectacles; until a few weeks ago, when a sudden conflict in schedules found him assigned to filming Margaret Sullivan's current film, Valentine had photographed all of the pictures starring Deanna Durbin. Some of these, with others like "Flings Over Babylon," carried his name into the exclusive circle of Academy Award nominees with almost clock-like regularity. Yet he is equally at home as an outdoor picture man or a comedy such as Abbott and Costello's "In The Navy."

A few years ago, he toured Europe filming process backgrounds in some fifteen countries for the Fox studio. He was, by the way, one of those who was working with the idea of re-photographing a projected image for background purposes when the introduction of the first superpositive emulsions made the process spry up, mushroom-like, in every studio. Even today he is one of the few "production" cinematographers who insists on handling much of the process work in his film himself, rather than leaving it to a special-process specialist.

Constantly experimenting, both with theme equipment in the studio and with theme equipment in his home, he has fathered a number of useful inventions. Among them may be mentioned a recent, ly-patented optical attachment for increasing focal depth and roundness; another for creating the effect of a narrowed focus on an ordinary stage; and such special lighting equipment as his "Duchenne," which was one of the first—and most logical—adaptations of fluorescent lighting to cinematography.

Valentine pioneered the use of super-fast emulsions like "Super-XX" for production camerawork. When he began to cinematograph, and even many film-company technicians, considered he was impetuously chasing wild geese. But since then two of the productions he photographed on that apparently "special-purpose" emulsion have been Academy Award nominations—and to-

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day top-ranking cinematographers in almost every other studio have followed suit, and some of the most photographically notable productions of this year have been photographed on this stock which everyone but Joe once said was unsuitable to production camerawork!

He's versatile in other fields, too. With a still camera he is a top-ranking artist in two fields—optical artistry, photography and studio portraiture. In this, as in his more recent screen work, his technique tends more toward the sharply-defined modern school than that of the conventional, soft-focus pictorialists. While studio assignments gave him small time to indulge in still work, his skills have none the less been honed in a number of outstanding International roles, receiving, as one did in pre-war Paris, premier awards wherever such distinctions are given.

With all of this he retains the same breezy self-assurance and cheerfulness which was him that first studio job so many years ago. He takes his work seriously, to be sure, but—well, we've visited him as many a set, working with many different stars and directors, and while we've found him impatient at times, and irked, when technical problems piled up, we've never yet encountered Joe Valentine at a time when his good humor was wholly missing. Somehow, we've an idea no troupe with which Valentine was working could ever be one of those tense, senseless ones where everyone ditches about with hated breath. If they did, a wisecrack from this cocky little Italian who takes greater pride in his skill as a spaghetti-thief than in the honors his camera has won him, would sincerely rip through the tension to turn the sweet grumblers into human beings again. Come to think of it, we could name quite a few directors and stars who would be a lot more valuable to the industry if they could make a picture or two with "Big Joseph!" **END.**

## Miniature Bottle

(Continued from Page 272)

extract "normal" speed for running your projector in recording and showing these non-synchronous sound movies of course, if you can use a projector with a constant-speed motor, like a two-speed sound-projector when switched to its 16-frame silent-picture speed, that detail will be automatically taken care of. But in most cases—oh yes, anyway—you'll be working with a variable-speed silent projector. I set my projector, both when we were making the original synchronized recording, and when showing the picture, to run at the slowest possible speed—just above the point where a flicker is visible on the screen. Keeping the projector always at this speed, I've had very good success in keeping picture and record synchronized.

All told, table-top workmaking has proven itself to me as one of the most fascinating branches of photography I've ever attempted, and one I can en-  
 davor to keep up.

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slatiously recommended to other 16mm. and 8mm. movie-makers.

But—one last warning: with film racing through your camera at 48-frame speed, a 100-foot roll will be exposed in less than a minute and a quarter of shooting time—so at eight cents a foot you may have to give up cigarettes for a while! I do! **END.**

## "Dream Home"

(Continued from Page 272)

the like. A light-tight door gives access to the darkroom proper.

Along one side of this darkroom is Fomble's drum-type developing-ma-

chine. Half-cylindrical tanks hold the various solutions—developer, bleach, re-developer, hypo, and so on, required for reversal processing, with several devoted exclusively to washing. In these rinsing-tanks, perforated pipes are arranged to throw a constant spray of water on the film being washed; Fomble has found from experience that half the secret of doing first-class black processing is to give the film really thorough washing between each chemical step.

In processing, the film is carried on ribbed drums which are revolved slowly inside the half-cylindrical tanks. The construction of these drums is interesting in itself. They are the third set

Foskett has built for use in this and previous dearkrooms. At first glance, they seem to be simple enough—just ground cylindrical drums, with a spiral band along their faces to keep the film in place. But providing that little spiral edge proved an interesting problem. "At first," says Foskett, "I made that spiral by simply soldering a wire around the face of the drum, winding it in a spiral, of course. That's sure easy to do, though, and you can never be sure that the wire is really firmly anchored; it is always likely to break loose just at the wrong moment. Besides, the wire doesn't give a deep enough groove to accept the film easily when you're loading the drum in the dark, or to hold it well after the mistreated film stretches.

"The next set I made with a somewhat deeper metal band, but this, too, wasn't a very successful piece of construction. Finally I hit upon the present idea. It's more complicated in the making, but it is sturdy and dependable in use. Beginning with a flat-surfaced drum, I had a sheet-metal shop make up a long strip of metal of the desired width, with one edge bent at right angles and about a quarter of an inch deep. Then I simply wound this around the drum spirally. I had a strip slightly wider than 16mm. film to solder to the drum, so it could be given a really rapid attachment. Then the 16mm. flange flange projected upward to guide the film onto the drum, and separate the successive windings. With this arrangement I can simply put my reel of exposed film in a spindle, or hold it in my hand, attach one end of the film to the drum, and load the drum automatically by simply spinning it round. When you come to the end of the film, all that's necessary is to clip the end in place with a strip of Scotch tape, and you're ready to start processing."

In use, the drums are moved from tank to tank by hand; but when in place in any of the tanks, they are revolved by motor. A long shaft extends the length of the tankage, with appropriate belts and pulleys below each tank. The drum has a similar pulley on the end of its shaft, so that all that is necessary is to connect the belt from the main drive-shaft to the drum. The governor and gearing from a standard phonograph-motor serve as a reduction gearing for this drive, and the power comes from a small electric motor.

After the final rinse, the film is wound onto folding wooden drying-racks, as shown in the illustration. A supporting block on the wall holds up one end of the drying-rack, while a hinged wooden arm, normally folded down out of the way, is swung up to hold the other end of the rack. Then all that is necessary is to dip one end of the film to the rack, and spin the rack: guided by the spiral groove in the developing-drum, the film feeds out onto a neat spiral around the drying-rack. Fastening the other end of the film with a rubber-band tensioned clip, to allow for the film's shrinkage in drying, the rack is loaded.

It is then transferred to the drying-box, where an electric fan and heating-coil combine a current of warm air through the box—which is large enough to hold several racks of film—and the film can be dried and ready for projection within a few minutes.

LaNelle Foskett is just as enthusiastic about this home studio set-up as is her husband. "Ray was the original movie-maker of the family," she says, "but I soon decided that if I wanted to keep on having a husband, I'd better get interested in his hobby, too. I didn't have any particular inclination toward camerawork, but I knew there must be some phase of movie-making I could get

interested in that would help Ray. I found it in planning pictures and writing scripts. Now we really make our pictures together—and I get just as much fun out of it all as Ray does.

"But that didn't help things much when Ray became interested in home processing, and we didn't have a dearkroom. He had to share a dearkroom with another movie-making friend who lived way over on the other side of town. Whenever Ray had some film to process, he would naturally go over to his friend's, processing, like a good husband, that he'd be home early. But just as naturally, like any enthusiastic photographer, he'd usually grow so interested in what he was doing that he lost all track of time.

"But with this dearkroom, he does his work here at home. We have a little intercommunicating telephone-line between the dearkroom, the projection-room and the house, so no matter what he is doing, I can always keep in touch with him. And since we've had this home studio set-up, instead of Ray's going out to see his movie-making friends, they naturally gravitate here to see us, so our home and social life quite naturally center around our hobby and the place we've made for it in our home.

"Ray and I have been married quite a few years, but since we've both found our spheres of interest in this movie-making hobby, and built this home around it, we're closer together than we've ever been."

Which is why the Foskett's movie-maker's "dream home" seems to be a "dream home" in more ways than one—and as such, at once as ideal and an inspiration to all movie-making households. **END**

## Cameraman's Tips

(Continued from Page 381)

shooting, his Weston "Master" comes out to give him a final check for perfect exposure. I've found it pays in my private picture-making, too.

Harry has another little gadget that I've appropriated and found extremely useful, too. It's a little rotary-dial type calculator put out as an advertisement by one of the Hollywood camera-rental firms. With it, once your meter has told you what the unfiltered exposure for a shot ought to be, this gadget tells you at a glance just what exposure to use for almost any combination of film and filtering; it also tells how to compensate your diaphragm-setting to keep the exposure right when you use extra-speeds above or below normal.

If you haven't one of these calculators, though, Harry has another trick that helps keep exposures uniform. Simply divide your meter's film-speed setting by the factor of the filter you're using, and re-set the meter's speed dial according to the result. From then on until you change films you can just take the meter's reading directly, and automatically get the correct exposure

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for that filter. The same thing works, too, for camera-speeds: you divide by the number of times above normal, or multiply by the number of times below normal—and your exposures come out right on the dot!

There's another exposure-conspiring trick a professional like Harry uses that can solve a serious problem for amateurs. Did you ever try to make a panning shot where your actors walked from the shade into bright sunlight, or the reverse? If you have, you know that if you set your exposure for the sunlit end, the shaded part will be badly underexposed, while if your exposure is right for the shadowed part, the sunlit end of the scene will be badly "burned up."

A professional simply "follows focus" on his exposure, by increasing or decreasing the shutter-opening to give him more or less exposure, as may be needed. You can do that with a Cine-Special and some few other cine-cameras that have adjustable shutters. With others, like my Bell & Howell 70-2, you can get much the same effect by opening or closing the lens' diaphragm—closing it as the subject walks into the sunlight, or opening it as he moves into the shade. You can't do it if you insist on holding the camera in your hand, but if you use a tripod you'll find it can be done easily and accurately after a little practice. Theoretically, changing the stop during a shot should make some difference in depth and definition, but in practice, with the short-focus lenses used on lenses and 8mm. cameras, this can't so important—any way, it isn't nearly as noticeable as a blacked-out underexposure or a washed-out overexposure!

All told, any actor who makes a hobby of photography can pick up a lot of practical pointers if he'll only keep his eyes open while his director of photography is arranging the next set-up. And cinematographers bring the grand fellows they are, it can develop into a friendly rivalry that's lots of fun. Harry, for example, ruthlessly criticizes my favorite poses, and finds faults with all my pet lenses, shots—and for my part of the game, I keep my eyes open to see if I can find fault with the way he's lighting me, and my fellow-players. Once in a while I catch him, but takes as a whole the advantage is all with him, for after all, he's a seasoned professional while I'm still a photographic amateur. But we have lots of fun at it, anyway! **END.**

## Camera Tricks

(Continued from Page 180)

tend to put something in at the top of the frame, it doesn't by any means follow that that's the only way they can be used. Obviously, if your real scene and the painting are carefully blended, you can use the painting to add, say, a gully in the foreground, or something at one side of the frame or the other.

Sometimes you can use photographs

instead of paintings for such shots. A.S.C. President Fred Jespersen still has a reel of tests he made with the process about twenty-five years ago, when he did just that. One of his associates at the old Bennett studio had been around the world, and sent back a lot of picture postcards of various famous scenic spots. Fred simply took a couple of the famed Bennett Beating Beauties and stood them up in front of a screen fence a bit taller than the girls were. Then by very carefully using the glass-shot technique with the postcards, placed in front of his lens, he successfully placed the Acropolis, the Taj Mahal, Mt. Everest, the pyramids, and several similar scenes in the background, showing up quite naturally above the top of the fence!

A three-dimensional development of this idea is still used now and then today. It is called the "front miniature." The basic principle is much the same as that of the glass shot, except that a three-dimensional miniature of the desired addition to the scene is placed in front of the lens instead of a painting.

Like the glass-shot painting, this miniature must be very precisely coordinated in design and perspective with the actual part of the scene. Since it is much closer to the lens than the real set, it can of course be made comparatively small. Sometimes, once you know how to manage the design and construction of such miniatures, you can use what the artists call "forced perspective"—that is, have the part of the miniature closest to the lens built to a slightly larger scale than the more distant part. Thus, if properly coordinated, can add a surprising illusion of depth.

Of course the lighting of the miniature must be carefully matched to that of the real part of the scene. Otherwise—to cite an obviously extreme example—you might get a shot in which the sun shone from the left on the lower half of the scene, and from the right in the upper part!

Ten or fifteen years ago an ingenious European cinematographer devised a process which, while a modification of the two methods just outlined, had vastly greater possibilities. This was the Schaeffgen process, named after its inventor, cinematographer Eugen Schaeffgen. Unfortunately, it has never been used to any extent in this country, as it appeared just as other and more flexible processes such as the Dunning Process and the projected background process came into use. It is distinctly intricate, but it offers possibilities that could certainly be put to good use by the painstaking filer of amateur scenic films. I'd hate to recommend it unreservedly to commercial filers, however, for while it is workable, I'm not at all sure how it stands as a practically patented system.

In a nutshell, here's how it works: The actors work in front of a small set—just big enough to furnish the minimum essential background for their ac-

tual movements. This set is placed as usual, directly in front of the camera. Also in front of the camera, and comparatively close to the lens, is placed a reflecting surface—a partially-silvered mirror or an intricate system of prisms—with the reflecting surface at a 45-degree angle to the lens' axis. At right angles to the camera's main lens-axis, and at the proper distance, is a painting, a photograph or a miniature set, the reflected image of which, blended with the small actual set, completes the scene.

In its simplest form, this system can make use of a front-surface mirror;

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that is, one in which the silver reflecting surface is deposited on the front of the glass support, rather than on the back. Most glass or mirror shops can make these up. Your front surface must be protected, by the way, as it's delicate.

With this mirror in place, the silver is carefully scraped from the glass over an area of precisely the right size and shape to permit the lens, full-size set and actors to be viewed by the lens. The photo, miniature or painting which is to complete the shot is then positioned, over at the side, at right angles to the lens, in such a position that its reflection and the real set blend into a single image.

This way, you can get an apparently spectacular set—say a huge interior of a castle, or the like—on the screen, while all you have to build in full-size construction is, say, a small back-wall, a door, or the like, just big enough so your actors have a little room to move about in. Naturally, you can have this real set of any size and shape you want, even making off unwanted parts of a real room or building by simply leaving the silvering of the mirror where it will conceal that part, and reflect into the lens something entirely different, though blended with that part of the real scene you photograph.

Several words of warning are necessary to anyone who tries any of these tricks. First of all, remember you can't pan, tilt or dolly your camera in use of these shots. Each set-up is good for only one camera-angle. Usually, it's the long-shot. If you come closer, for medium-shot or close-ups, you'll either have to make a completely new glass-shot, miniature or Schaeffertan set-up, or place your action and camera-angles so that your real background will be sufficient, and not reveal that the previous shot was a trick. However, that isn't much of a handicap. If, for example, you're putting a willing on a stool, or Schaeffertan-processing a big room around your actors, once you've established the spec-

tacular setting in a long-shot, your audience's imagination will put it there, even if in the closer angles it only sees a simple, plain back-wall.

Secondly, your camera must be absolutely steady on its tripod, and have as steady a film-motion as possible. Otherwise, you may have the heavier painting or miniature visibly wobbling, while the actually more distant "real" part of the set stands steady.

Finally, doing these tricks and doing them at all convincingly takes genuine skill and precision. You can't get away with crude painting or a crude miniature, even though superabundant detail may not be desirable. And the perspective of the "artificial" part of the shot must be accurate, or the composite scene on the screen will look phony. And the alignment of real action, artificial addition, and camera must be precise to the Nth degree, or again, your shot will be so "fakely" you might better not try it.

All of these methods have been used many times in professional filming, sometimes even with cameras hardly better than today's best substandard outfit. With precision and skill there's no reason why they can't be used in 16mm. and 8mm. in either black-and-white or color. But—don't expect access the first try! It takes patient, painstaking work to do any camera-trick, and do it convincingly. And there will be real-izing work. But, properly done, they can add immeasurable "production value" to amateur scenarios and documentary films. END

### Normal Exposures

(Continued from Page 10)

test scene in color comes out as three contrary black-and-white images in the earlier stages of color-film processing.

The practical limits of error with a contrary film are about plus or minus half a stop; if exposure varies outside these limits the image will be sufficiently affected for the change to be seen clearly

by on the screen. With a soft film, it may sometimes be possible to extend these limits to plus or minus one stop, but as a rule such a change would affect the image gradation even if the change in brightness failed to attract attention. In color film, smaller limits of error are required as a result of color-balances; changes outside plus or minus a quarter of a stop may be quite clearly obvious on the screen in certain types of subjects.

In quoting these limits of error, it is necessary to point out that they are based on a critical appreciation of screen brightness, and that those who set themselves lower ideals than perfection may find it permissible to make greater mistakes. It is also important to bear in mind that mass-produced exposure meters cannot be expected to show no errors whatever from perfection, particularly where double-range instruments are in question. If anomalous results are obtained which cannot be explained in other ways, it is consequently worth while having the meter checked for response, although out of several hundred meters which have been through the writer's hands in the last few years only two have been found to be seriously incorrect in this respect.

Although the above instructions can be used for the production of standard quality images, and can be applied without further ado for all normal work, there are times when some other type of image is required for special purposes. Such special-effects, as they may conventionally be called, are produced either by varying the image contrast, or by varying the screen brightness from the level which has been set up as a standard. Scenes in haunted houses, for example, are usually shot with extremely high contrast, so that much of the scene is so much under-exposed as to be black, while the main subject has more or less standard screen brightness; night scenes filmed by day are merely produced by reducing the normal screen brightness to a much lower level and overcorrecting the sky.

Contrast is usually a matter, in such effects, of careful lighting, so artificial light often infinitely greater possibilities than daylight, and will be considered shortly, but screen brightness levels have already been examined by making a speed test to establish the normal standard image, show a run through the speed test will show just what effect varying exposure-levels have on the screen brightness of standard objects. It is thus a simple matter to put down on paper the number of stops more or less exposure in the camera are needed to produce a particular type of screen brightness, and these variations from normal can always be used to obtain a pre-determined result on the screen.

So long as the standard exposure for matched face-tones is used as a basis for this variation in screen brightness, the results on the screen will be both consistent and reliable, but they are quite

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unreliable when based on the readings of an ordinary photometer exposure meter, since the latter gives readings which vary with the character and contrast of the subject. Those who take their hobby seriously will also be well advised to make speed test films with their favorite filters—a few frames for each exposure-level is ample, and there is no need to waste five feet of film every time. The facts obtained from these tests can be noted down and after this literally any type of image can be reproduced to order.

In applying these factors of an many stops under or over-exposure, it is naturally important to have some sense of the standard image which a normal reading produces, but some experience of the film stock used will soon provide an adequate guide for this. The fact is that so long as a standard exposure is wasted for a standard image-quality, the rules given earlier can be applied mechanically, but that as soon as it is necessary to deviate from this standard, human judgment—based, admittedly, on observed facts in the speed test—must be applied to the problem.

The speed test film, moreover, can be used for another very important purpose. In any sunlight scene, it is possible to take one reading on the sun and one on the sky, the sun not being allowed to fall on the artificial high-light when taking the latter reading. The result will be the difference in exposure required to produce matched face tones in the sun and in the shade, so that the number of stop divisions difference between the two is clearly a measure of the contrast in the lighting.

This is itself a convenient point where there is some doubt as to whether the shadows are sufficiently well lit to record properly, and we can go about establishing the fact in the following manner. If the sun reading is being used as a basis for scenes exposure, and the shade reading is two stops less than that for the sun, we can refer to the lighting contrast as having a value of two stops (which means—since every stop division doubles the exposure given—that the light from the sun is four times as intense as that from the sky). While this value for lighting contrast makes it possible to ascertain whether two scenes are likely to give more or less the same contrast on the screen, the estimation of shadow detail is just as important an advantage.

On looking through the speed test, one finds that at a certain degree of under-exposure (preferably judged here by a shot taken in the shade, so that lighting contrast does not make the judgment difficult) the face tones do not show full detail. This may, perhaps, be at three stops under-exposure. Now, the shadows of a face in a sunlight scene are only illuminated by the sky, and if we use the sun reading as a basis for exposure, it is simple to find from the shade reading just what the shadow tones of the face are going to look like. If the shade read-

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ing is 2 stops lower than the sun reading, the shadow tones of the face are going to be given just the same exposure as that found in the speed test shot with three stops less exposure than our chosen standard, and it is perfectly simple to find a level of lighting contrast beyond which the film cannot be expected to reproduce both sunlight and shadow sides of the face at the same time. END.

### Home Movie Previews

(Continued from Page 18)

should give a mistaken-identity explanation for the Indian girl's final murder of the villain—which, if it is intended, is not too clearly established. If this motivation is not intended, it would be better to follow the practice that was so useful in the old silent-picture westerns, and have the hero in an easily-identifiable shirt—say a light color—and the villain in an equally distinctive one, say in a dark shade. This would be particularly useful in making clear who is hitting who in the fight scene.

It would seem to us also that it would have been dramatically better if the villain had not seen the Indian girl immediately after he killed and robbed the hero. It could easily have been established that she saw her action, but he did not see her. Likewise, after demonstrating the hero as an ardent, faithful husband, his display of affection for this Indian maid is a bit out of character. Similarly, fading out in the middle of the wife's battle for her virtue with the villain leaves certain obvious doubts in the audience's mind which are never dispelled.

The musical score for this picture is excellent in every way, especially in the

way both score and cutting are handled for dramatic effect. The music definitely adds to the film's dramatic value; but even without it, "A Tale of the North" stands out as a very much better than average scenic production. END.

### Showcase

(Continued from Page 18)

secured with the special infra-red flash reflectors that several of the equipment manufacturers have designed in collaboration with Wabash, and which are now being made available.

A peculiar characteristic of infra-red film is off-focus. Pictures will not be in nearly-sharp focus unless a slight focusing correction is made to compensate for the type of lens used, because the infra-red rays focus on a slightly different plane than visible light rays. The peculiar effects invisible light produces are extremely interesting. Dark lipstick, for instance, comes out almost pure white. Invisible veins lying under the skin show up with startling contrast. Old stains in clothing, even though dry-cleaned, show up clear in the picture as though they had never been removed. A clean-shaven man appears slightly unshaven, and many other odd effects will show up under various conditions with this type of photography.

The new lamp will be identified as Wabash Superflash Blackout bulb, will list at \$60, and will be commercially available the latter part of August. Complete details can be had by writing Wabash Photolamp Corp., Brooklyn, N. Y.

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### Filmo Reels Climate-proofed

Anyone who has had the experience of having the wettest and often corrosive atmosphere of coastal or tropical regions rust and ruin film reels will be interested in the results of a rigid test just given to Bell & Howell steel reels. For more than 4½ days, according to Bell & Howell research reports, a standard 1686-foot Bell & Howell steel reel was continuously drenched with a salt spray bath. At the end of test time, Bell reports, the reel was found to be in excellent condition. The original luster was slightly dulled, but the finish was not basically affected; there was no peeling, chipping or cracking, and no chance for corrosion or rust.

Bell & Howell states that this test gave conclusive proof of the rust-retarding properties of the Bending process and of the fine lacquer finish applied to all the firm's steel reels, from the 200-foot and 400-foot Ream reels to the big 2,000-foot Blum reels.

### Crown Cable Flash Synchronizer

A radically new type of flash synchronizer has been introduced by the Crown Instrument Corp., 22 Liberty St., New York. Combining manual and mechanical operation, the device consists of a standard cable-release of metal construction, with the synchronizing unit permanently built into the portion normally held in the hand. It is in all respects a normal cable-release, but becomes a flashbulb synchronizer when electrically connected to any type of battery-own and reflector. The device weighs less than 1 ounce, and can be used with any camera which can use a cable-release. The timing element is fixed in that it has been pre-set to accommodate present-day flashbulbs all of which have approximately the same initial lag. Differences of adjustment are stated to be easily made by a quick adjustment of plunger-length to the particular shutter involved. A special stroke-control element adjusts the synchronizer to the characteristics of the individual shutter so that the stroke delivered is just enough to operate the shutter—no more and no less—regardless of the force exerted on the plunger.

### G-E Booklet on Child Pictures

General Electric has just published an interesting little brochure, "Tips on Better Child Pictures," containing suggestions by Ruth Alexander Nichols, famous child-picture specialist. While the booklet deals primarily with smiles, many of the technical and psychological points brought out by Mrs. Nichols can be applied equally well to movies. The booklet

is spite of the war, membership figures in Britain's Royal Photographic Society are reported the highest in history.



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### Seemann Splicer

An improved version of the well-known Seemann splicer is announced by the Wholesale Photo Supply Co., of Hollywood and Sun Francisco, successors to Seemann's, Inc. Among the features may be mentioned tension-pins which hold the film taut, assuring accurate alignment of splices; a single-operation pressure-bar for fast splicing; a dry scraper, and register-pins against film. Film regardless of how it comes off the reel, eliminating the necessity of reversing or turning over the film when splicing. The unit costs for \$3.95.

### Aluminum for Defense Freed By New RCA Recording Disc

Many tons of aluminum have been freed for use in the National Defense Program by the action of the RCA Research Laboratories in perfecting a new 16-inch fire-resistant, paper-core recording blank for use in home recording, as well as in radio studios, airline terminals, and other locations where sound is recorded for "reference" purposes.

W. W. Early, RCA Victor Manager of Recording and Record Sales, announced the new disc, at the same time pointing to the fact that it is thinner and lighter than the aluminum-core blank, and is being sold at one-half the price of the old type.

"The new blank provides a quality of reproduction that is unsurpassed by any other paper-core blank, no matter of what size," Mr. Early said. "Many months of research produced the perfection of the special type of paper used in the core. The result is an amazing flexibility which prevents warping and allows the disc to flatten out at the mere pressure of the cutting head."

The new 16-inch blank joins the smaller sized paper-core blanks previously announced by RCA Victor, and widely used in studio and home recording.

The disc itself is slow-bearing because of the paper core, and the shavings will not support combustion. With no fire hazard involved, the shavings can be thrown into any rubbish can. Its cutting surface permanency is assured.



### Cinea Cement Improved

From the American Rolux Co. comes the report of improvements in their Cinea film-cement and its packaging. It is stated to be odorless, slow to evaporate when the cork is off the bottle, and to be highly efficient in joining all types of film—acetate and nitrate—35mm., 16mm., and 8mm.

An interesting feature is the new-type glass container. It is in the shape of a pyramid, stated to be a distinct improvement over the old-style bottle because it cannot, so it is tilted, roll or tip over and spill its contents. Another improvement is the replacement of the usual brush with a glass applicator built into the plastic cork. This is used to assure an even spread of cement on the film surface. For further details inquire at your dealer or write the American Rolux Co., Inc., 155 East 46th St., New York.

### No Sound Royalties On Army Training Films

Both Electrical Research Products, Inc. (ERPI) and RCA have waived all sound-recording royalty charges on the Army Training Films being produced by the Academy Research Council for the War Department. Thus the sound companies become participants in the non-profit Training Film production program on the same basis as the participating studios. The elimination of these royalty charges will result in a considerable saving in the cost of these films to the government, and materially increases the motion picture industry's contribution to the National Defense.

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